

**EFFECTIVENESS OF SALES MANAGERS'
LEADERSHIP IN IMPLEMENTING LEAD
MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY ON TAN CHONG
MOTORS (SARAWAK)**

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CHONG MOTORS (SARAWAK)**

**BY
OOI CHIN LYE**

**Thesis submitted to
Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business,
Universiti Utara Malaysia
In Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Management**

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ABSTRACT

The mission of Tan Chong Motors (TCM) Sarawak was to fulfill top management's vision for Sarawak Region Mid-Term Plan of increasing the current market share of 3.6% (for year 2011) to 24.4% by 2016. The sales management and leadership behaviors of present Heads of Branch (HOBs) were found to be ineffective, especially in managing and leading the sales teams to achieve the mid-term goal by Year 2016. The aim of this research was to examine factors influencing HOBs' leadership in implementing lead management in Tan Chong Motors (TCM) Sarawak region. Hence, the major focus of this study was to examine the effectiveness of HOBs' leadership behaviors and sales management approaches in the branch sales operation in Sarawak Region. For this purpose, an action research (AR) embedded within the conceptual framework was conducted in three cycles involving; formative evaluation, application and implementation of change by Tan Chong Motors Sarawak Region and TCM Head Quarter (HQ). Process, impact and outcome evaluation data was obtained from quantitative and a combination of qualitative approaches namely; structured interviews, participant's observations, archival search, focus group discussion and critical incident technique. The participants of this study were HOBs of the five branches in TCM Sarawak Region. Survey was also conducted on 62 sales advisors from the respective branch. The study found that inadequacy of leadership behaviors and lack of management knowledge, lack of structured management control processes, lack of clear job scope and an inefficient Lead Management Information System were the main reasons contributing to the leadership ineffectiveness in implementation lead management in TCM Sarawak Region. With the findings of this AR, TCM HQ has adopted and standardized the four proposals made, namely to adopt farming approach of selling, to enhance Lead Management Information System, to standardize HOBs' job scope and, to provide structured training program for all TCM HOBs.

Keywords: sales management, leadership behavior, lead management, leadership effectiveness, management control

ABSTRAK

Misi Tan Chong Motors (TCM) di negeri Sarawak adalah untuk memenuhi visi pengurusan tertinggi bagi Wilayah Sarawak sebagai meningkatkan syer pasaran semasa sebanyak 3.6% (untuk tahun 2011) kepada 24.4% menjelang tahun 2016. Pengurusan jualan dan kepimpinan Ketua Cawangan (HOB) yang sedia ada didapati tidak berkesan, terutama dalam mengurus dan memimpin pasukan jualan untuk mencapai matlamat pertengahan penggal menjelang tahun 2016. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji faktor yang mempengaruhi kepimpinan HOB bagi melaksanakan pengurusan *lead* di TCM wilayah Sarawak. Oleh itu, fokus utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji keberkesanan tingkah laku kepimpinan HOB dan pendekatan pengurusan operasi jualan cawangan di dalam wilayah-wilayah di Sarawak. Kajian ini merangkumkan satu kerangka konsep yang dikaji melalui tiga kitaran yang melibatkan penilaian formatif, penerapan dan perlaksanaan perubahan oleh TCM Wilayah Sarawak dan Ibu Pejabat TCM. Oleh yang demikian, proses, kesan dan hasil penilaian data diperolehi melalui kaedah kuantitatif dan kombinasi kaedah kualitatif seperti kaedah temu bual berstruktur, pemerhatian turut serta, carian arkib, perbincangan secara berkumpulan dan teknik insiden kritikal. Subjek kajian ini terdiri daripada HOB yang mewakili lima cawangan TCM di Wilayah Sarawak. Kaji selidik juga dijalankan bersama 62 penasihat jualan dari cawangan masing-masing. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa kepincangan tingkah laku kepimpinan dan kekurangan pengetahuan dalam pengurusan, kekurangan dalam proses kawalan struktur pengurusan, kekurangan skop kerja yang jelas dan ketidakcekapan Sistem Maklumat Pengurusan *Lead* merupakan sebab-sebab utama yang menyumbang kepada ketidakberkesanan kepimpinan dalam pelaksanaan pengurusan *lead* di TCM Wilayah Sarawak. Dengan penemuan penyelidikan ini, ibu pejabat TCM telah menerima pakai dan menyeragamkan empat cadangan yang dibuat iaitu mengamalkan pendekatan *farming* dalam jualan, meningkatkan Sistem Maklumat Pengurusan *Lead*, menyeragamkan skop kerja dan menyediakan program latihan berstruktur untuk semua Ketua Cawangan TCM.

Kata kunci: pengurusan jualan, tingkah laku kepimpinan, pengurusan *lead*, keberkesanan kepimpinan

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFTA	ASEAN Free Trade Area
AR	Action Research
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
CKD	Completely Knocked Down
CSI	Customer Service Index
ED	Executive Director
EI	Emotional Intelligence
TCM	Tan Chong Motors
FI	Final Invoice (referring to vehicle sales invoicing)
HCM	Human Capital Management
HOBs	Heads of Branch refers to Branch/Sales Managers or Assistant Sales Managers who are the heads and responsible for the branch sales operation.
IS Dept.	Information System Department
LM	Lead Management
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MD	Marketing Director
MTP	Mid-Term Plan
MAA	Malaysian Automotive Association
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Area
NML	Nissan Motor Co., Ltd., Japan
PA	Executive Director's Personal Assistant
PMS	Performance Measurement System
OM	Operation Manager
Researcher	Refer to the writer of this action research
RM	Regional Manager
SAs	Sales Advisors (or Salesmen)
SFA	Sales Force Automation
SSI	Sales Satisfaction Index
TM	Training Manager
VSM	Vehicle Sales Management System

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The aims of this action research is not only to analyze factors relating to the effectiveness of leadership of Head of Branch (HOB) and the effects of their behaviors in implementing Lead Management in Sarawak branch sales operation, but also to understand its influence on sales force performance.. The main focus of this action research is to examine the HOB's leadership and management behaviors in leading the sales advisors in implementing lead management. Lead management is an important element of personal selling and sales management (Monat, 2011; Payne, 1994). Leadership behaviors in this study comprised of providing direction, motivating, training, coaching and supporting the overall selling effort of the sales advisors. Management of sales operation includes planning, organizing, coordinating, monitoring, controlling and evaluating the sales activities. Sales force effectiveness and productivity is influenced by the leadership of sales managers (DeCarlo, Rody and DeCarlo, 1999).

1.2 Background of Company

This study was conducted in Tan Chong Motors (TCM), franchise holder and sole distributor of Nissan passenger and light commercial vehicles in Malaysia since 1957. It has 90 sales branches and authorized dealers nationwide, and supported by 74 after-sales service centers. In Year 2011, the company's vehicle sales captured an overall

market share of 5.1% in the Malaysian Automotive Industry (Appendix 1.1). In the Non-National market segment, the company is ranked third and acquired market share of 12.6 percent, trailing behind Toyota (35.6 percent) and Honda (13.3 percent). Prior to the introduction of our national car (Proton) in 1983, Nissan was the market leader in the automotive industry in Malaysia. Toyota has taken over as the market leader in the Non-National Market since year 1984.

1.3 Overview of the Problem

Nissan in Malaysia was under performing from 1998 to 2006 (Appendix 1.2) and achieving less than five percent of the market share. The highest percentage of market share achieved was 4.5 percent in 2004 and 2005 respectively in the whole automotive industry. This is partly because Nissan Motor Co. Ltd Japan (NML) has no direct investment in ASEAN-6 until Year 2001 where NML has taken control of Nissan Motor Indomobile with 83.3 percent share ownership. In Year 2004, NML has become the major shareholder of Nissan Motor Thailand with 75 percent share ownership. Prior to this, new Nissan models introduced and imported from Japan were paying high import duties. In Malaysia, Nissan Sales were trailing behind both Toyota and Honda (Appendix 1.1). Run out models like Nissan Sentra, Nissan Vanette Window Van, Chassis and Cab and Cefiro in Japan (or even globally) were in Malaysian market for very long time. Traditionally, the Product Life Cycle (PLC) of all car models ought to last for four to five years only.

Nissan Malaysia lost its competitiveness, especially in term of pricing advantage as no Completely Knock Down (CKD) models were made available for ASEAN countries till early 2007. Nissan Motor Co., Ltd. (NML), Japan was facing financial crisis when the company encountered billions of dollars losses. In 1999, French automaker, Renault formed a strategic alliance with Nissan to revitalize the company. This alliance allowed Renault to own 40 percent stake in Nissan, and Nissan received 15 percent stake of Renault's stock. For a start, Nissan Renault alliance has focused heavily in the US market when it is the global main market. Little emphasis was placed in the ASEAN market by NML. In response to the regional grouping of trading block namely; North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) and European Union, ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) agreement was agreed upon in 1992 by the ASEAN members that comprised of Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The liberalization of trade in the region through elimination of tariffs was aimed to assist ASEAN to be more efficient and competitive in the global market.

With the implementation of AFTA in 2005, Malaysia has to comply with minimum tariffs of between 0 – 5 percent requirement as agreed under the Common Effective Preferential Tariffs (CEPT) in the AFTA (Mohd. Rosli, 2006). Thailand has gained greater advantage over Malaysia as Toyota Motor Corporation (Japan) has set up its subsidiary, Toyota Motor Thailand Co. Ltd. in Thailand since 1956. Toyota Motor Corporation took advantage of the AFTA ruling by diverting its investment to ASEAN, especially in Thailand, Indonesia and Philippines. Completely-Knock-Down

(CKD) models namely Camry, VIOS and Altis were exported from Thailand to Malaysia. Toyota Unser from Indonesia was brought in by UMW Toyota Motor Malaysia, sole Toyota dealer appointed by Toyota Motor Corporation Japan. Similarly, Honda Automobile (Thailand) Co. Ltd and its subsidiary, Honda Cars Manufacturing (Thailand) Co. Ltd were established in 1999 in Thailand. CKD models such as City, Civic and Accord were also exported into Malaysia.

In 2011, Toyota was the market leader in Non-National Market segment with almost 3 time higher sales than Nissan. Honda, the No. 2 market leader was focusing mainly in the passenger vehicles market with three models namely Accord, Civic and City. They were able to out-perform Nissan although Nissan has full range of both passenger and commercial vehicles. Despite the fact that Nissan has increased their equity to 83.3 percent in Indonesia (Year 2001) and 75 percent (Year 2004) in Thailand, no CKD models were made available for the Malaysian market. The first ASEAN CKD model brought in by Nissan Malaysia was from Thailand, namely Latio Sedan and Hatchback models in 2007. In the following year (early 2008), another CKD model namely Grand Livina was brought in from Indonesia.

In this volatile and highly competitive automotive market, NML has announced its Mid Term Business Plan known as Nissan Power 88 on 27th June 2011 (Appendix 1.3). Nissan would strive towards achieving greater heights by setting a challenging vision of achieving a global market share of 8 percent from share of 5.8 percent for Year 2010 and increase its corporate operating profit (COP) to 8 percent by year 2016

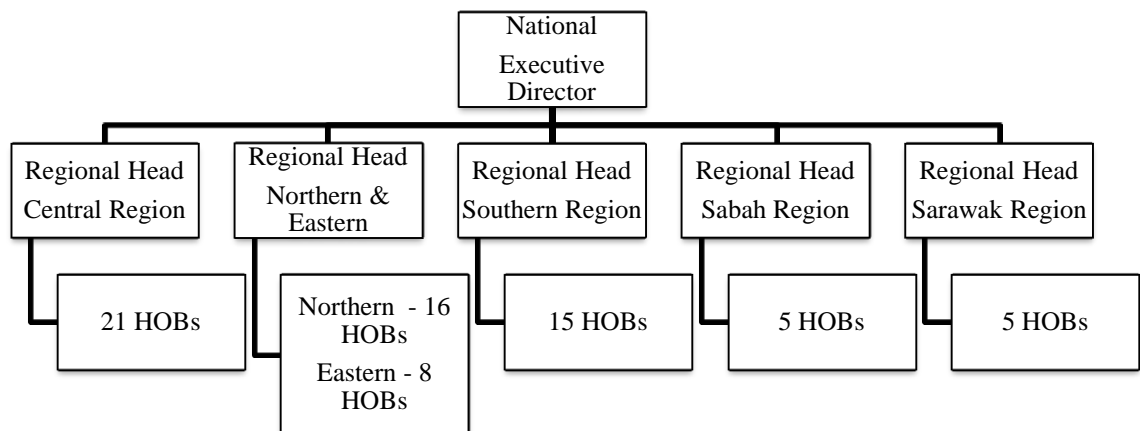
compared to 6 percent operating profit for year 2010. One of NML’s strategic Mid Term Business Plan (MTP) is to focus on ASEAN market. It aims to sell 500,000 units and to be the market leader in all ASEAN countries by Year 2016. For Nissan Malaysia, the sales target given is 120,000 units and to be the market leader in Non-National Make market in Malaysian Automotive Industry by year 2016. In order to achieve that, a Mid Term Strategic Road Map (Appendix 1.4) was developed by the top management of TCM.

1.3.1 Statement of Problem

The company sales operation is divided into Northern Regions which comprised of Perak, Penang, Kedah and Perlis; Eastern Region which consists of Pahang, Terengganu and Kelantan; Southern Region that covers Negeri Sembilan, Malacca and Johor; Wilayah Persekutuan, Selangor Region; Sabah Region and Sarawak Region (Figure 1.1):

Figure 2.1

TCM Organization Chart



To be in line with the company's overall mission, the researcher has developed the strategic mission for the region, namely Sarawak Region. The stated mission was not only fulfilling researcher's top management's direction, but also complying with the aim and demand given by its principle company in Japan as Sarawak Region's sales contribution was trailing far behind its competitors with 3.1 percent (2010) and 3.5 percent (2011) market share as compared to Toyota (24.0 percent and 23.3 percent for 2010 and 2011).

For Sarawak MTP, innovative strategies and action plans are no longer just an option, but it is imperative and a necessity in order to achieve the quantum leap (Appendix 1.5) set by TCM and NML. In the Non-National market, Toyota Malaysia was leading as they had captured 35.6 percent market share (Appendix 1.1). Henceforth, with the support from NML, Japan, a structured Strategic Road Map and Plan has been developed by Nissan Malaysia Top Management to be the market leader in Malaysia for Non National Car Segment by Year 2016.

TCM needs to increase its sales of Nissan vehicles by capturing present and new customers. Past research found that it was much more costly to find new customers than to maintain loyal customers (Hsu, Lee, Wang, and Chung, 2012). However, to increase market share to 24.4 percent by 2016 is an uphill task and post a great challenge for the sales operation (Appendix 1.5). This challenging task seems impossible as the region does not have sufficient loyal customers to work on (Appendix 1.6).

Currently, there is no Customer Relationship Management system in Tan Chong Motor. Nevertheless, the company plan to implement a multitude of action plans and activities based on the strategic road map developed for the next five years. Marketing and marketing mix strategy would be executed as new models would be introduced to penetrate in various product segments, especially in A Segment (Appendix 1.7). Segment A refers to vehicles with engine capacity below 1000 cc. TCM currently does not have any car model for sale in Segment A. New sales network would be launched throughout the country.

The after-sales services and workshops facilities would also be redesigned and reengineered. Marketing communication mix strategy would also be employed in advertising, radio/TV appearances, direct mailing, emails, trade exhibitions, and social media marketing by TCM headquarter.

Lead generation is an important element in organization that offers products and services (Monat, 2011). As pointed out by Payne (1994), CRM process starts with prospecting. Prospecting refers to tracking and searching for contact or lead (Reinartz and Kumar, 2003; Shultz, 1995). A major part of successful prospecting requires sales people to actively generating leads or contacts. Hence, generating leads becomes an important activity of sales function. Based on a report titles The Selling in Turbulent Times Survey (Accenture, 2003), almost one third of the executives surveyed viewed that sales people have failed to generate sufficient leads. In addition, the survey also indicated that the root cause of poor sales performance is not the

economic environment, but rather it is the failure of sales management in managing sales opportunities. In the same survey, many executives opined that sales force performance has great impact on organization bottom lines. Leads can be generated from a wide variety of sources and activities such as seminars, road shows, mass mailing, advertising, referrals, and others (Ramakrishnan, Joshi, Negi, Krishnapuram and Balakrishnan, 2006). In addition to the initiatives launched by marketing department, any social, civic, business, or casual contacts can be a lead and become prospects and customers in the near future (Appendix 1.8).

HOBs were reminded of the Lead Management System that was launched in July 2011. SAs are required to key in all their leads and prospects into this system daily. To validate the invoicing process of a vehicle, the system would pull from the system data bank for this particular name of customer. Failing which, the invoicing of such vehicle would be rejected automatically. The Lead Management System would enable the sales managers to mobilize the movement of opportunities through the sales process cycle. Lead management could also mean opportunity management as the process could allow the HOBs to proactively monitor the high volume of leads that could be converted into actual sales in the long run. Therefore, as reflected in TCM sales process (Appendix 1.9), HOBs need to proactively organized sales prospecting activities and manage the sales leads that were generated.

The SA would then need to start to record and monitor all the leads generated through all sales prospecting activities. HOBs were instructed to remind all SA not to focus

on those HOT prospects alone and ignore the contacts or leads that were classified as COLD. These leads require prolonged interactive relationship building and nurturing to convert these prospects into future sales.

Whatever the origin, all leads represent possible vehicle sales for ETCM and they should be approached in a systematic and structured manner. The purpose is to increase and nurture these leads in order to convert these leads to actual sales. By converting leads into sales is what it takes to stay in the business. Traditionally, majority of sales advisors would be ‘throwing’ leads into the sales funnel and wait for orders to materialize (Falkson, 2009). In the absence of adequate follow up activities in monitoring and nurturing the leads, many opportunities were lost because leads were not the primary interest of salespeople. Lead could be the life blood of the business (Jeffrey, 2006). Without a proper system and process to proactively identify, grow and nurture these leads into long-term sales opportunities, companies include ETCM would lose huge volumes of potential sales and customers.

Many companies have spends millions of ringgit creating awareness through promotional activities and generate leads. SA could end up disregarding leads generated because they were not considered hot prospects or sales opportunities (Falkson, 2009). According to Falkson (2009), the lost opportunities remaining in the funnel could be quite substantial. Cannon and Perreault (1999) and Zoltners, Sinha and Zoltners (2001), lamented that being the key link in creating and building up relationship between the organization and customers, SA usually work independently

and rarely being supervised. As a result the leads generated all these years may not being monitored at all. A major part of successful prospecting requires actively generating leads. SAs need to be aware and seek out potential customers. Leads can be generated from reactive and proactive methods. According to Ramakrishnan et al. (2006), reactive methods are those leads that react towards company's advertisements and promotions. Proactive methods refer to the prospecting activities as organized and planned by the sales managers and sales people (Ramakrishnan et al. 2006).

Currently, all HOBs in TCM are concerned with hot prospects that would be converted into sales immediately. There was no emphasis to follow up on the leads either collected or generated from various activities organized by the company. The roles played by the HOBs are purely focusing on achieving their respective branch target. These are no faults of the HOBs as it is part of the company structure and process that achieving sales is their main priority. Even the senior management has stated that developing and training of SAs are not their responsibilities, but rely purely on the training department to transform the SAs behavior. In short, the leadership's approach is to ensure the task of achieving targets is accomplished. The HOBs are seen as transactional leader where no individual SA received attention.

In July 2011, TCM launched the CRM activity for the frontline sales people to automate the prospecting activities via LM Information System. LM Information System would enable the frontline staff or sales management team including sales force to mobilize the movement of opportunities through the sales cycle (Widmier,

Jackson and McCabe, 2002). Lead Management could also mean opportunity management as it could proactively monitor the high volume of leads that could be converted into actual sales. Being in the frontline, SAs are key people to provide value added services for the customers and the leads generated (Beverland, 2001).

Personal selling and sales management are important aspects of marketing (Baldauf, Cravens and Piercy, 2001; Atuahene-Gima and Michael, 1998). The competitive environmental pressure has triggered many companies that attempt to enhance the effectiveness and productivity of sales people (Cannon and Perreault, 1999; Grant and Cravens, 1999). On the other hand, sales people effectiveness is greatly influenced by the leadership of sales managers in the organization (DeCarlo, et al. 1999). Sales manager could use their business experience and product knowledge to make strategic decision to guide and assist the sales people in implementing their daily sales plan. In addition, sales managers could communicate and collaborate effectively with the sales people in order to motivate and inspire them to gain higher performance. Successful and effective sales leadership involves supporting salespeople in executing the entire sales process. These sales managers have latest information on the status of sales opportunities and provide support and guidance to the sales people through various steps of the sales process.

This opportunity pipeline (Appendix 1.8) starts with generating leads for products to be marketed. Therefore, it is important to build and proactively manage the sales pipeline by nurturing, tracking and following up with every lead. The frontline staffs,

such as SAs need to start to record and monitor various leads collected and generated from both marketing communications and sales promotion activities. Both HOBs and SAs always focus on HOT prospects and ignored leads that were classified as COLD prospects.

The aims of this AR is not only to examine the behaviors of HOB leadership and management skill in leading the implementation of Lead Management, but also to understand its influence on sales force performance. Currently, the practices were merely keying in the leads into the system when bookings were placed by branches. As the lead process stated, in order to generate Vehicle Invoice (after registration with Road Transport Dept.), the bookings have to be keyed in as leads. There was no concerted effort in implementing this initiative of automating the sales process (prospecting activity).

Due to the highly competitive environment in automotive industry, increasing sales force performance is a vital factor in driving the success for any organization in the automotive industry (Longino, 2009). However, limited empirical research has been conducted that can help to improve sales force performance within the automotive industry in vehicle sales. This research is an attempt to fill this void by examining the influence of sales managers in implementing lead management on sales force performance in ETCM Malaysia that could be generalized for similar companies in the automotive industry.

1.4 Research Questions

Grant and Cravens (1996) defined sales people's performance as an evaluation of the sales people's behavioral performance and outcome performance. Behavioral performance includes the technical knowledge, skills and tasks that they are doing, such as sales planning, prospecting activities and others. On the other hand, outcome performance refers to sales, market share and customer satisfaction. The sales management and leadership skill of HOBs are important, especially in planning, managing and controlling the sales activities. HOBs need to determine the direction and provide input and feedback to sales advisors. However, limited or little attention was given for the lead management that involved prospecting processes and sales activities in TCM Sarawak branches. HOBs were focusing on immediate results of achieving monthly sales targets and not giving due attention to achieve long term goals of region, especially to meet the sales targets by 2016. Hence, the research questions developed for this study are as follow:

- a. Are HOBs' leadership in TCM Sarawak region effective in implementing lead management?
- b. What are the factors that influenced the effective implementation of lead management in TCM Sarawak region?
- c. How TCM Sarawak region could enhance its HOB's effectiveness in implementing lead management.

1.5 Research Objectives

- i) To examine the effectiveness of HOB leadership and management competencies in implementing lead management in TCM Sarawak region.
- ii) To identify factors that influenced the HOB competency in lead management

implementation in TCM Sarawak region.

- iii) To develop a process and/or a program that can help to enhance the effectiveness of HOB in implementing lead management in TCM Sarawak region.

1.6 Significant of Study

The study examines the leadership capabilities, styles, approaches and competencies of HOB in discharging their duties in branch operation. It is a primary task of leaders and managers in the frontline operation (Mintzberg, 1973). In addition, the effectiveness of existing lead management information system would be examined and evaluated. This research also aim to contribute to a change of sales management leadership and provide input to the senior management in designing and developing programs in implementing lead management (Wang, Dou and Zhou, 2012; Zuber-Skerritt and Perry 2002). From operation perspective, improving branch operation effectiveness is an important aspect of organization development as the measure of organization's effectiveness is its ability to run its sales operations at optimal levels.

From a practical perspective, improving branch effectiveness is an important aspect of organizational development (Cummings and Worley, 2001). Cumming and Worley (2001) defined organization effectiveness as its ability to run its day to day operation at optimal levels. March and Simon (1958) pointed out that it is the mean by which managers in organizations make decisions in carrying out their respective day to day tasks. The process outcomes of the study would benefit the branch and region in

striving for greater achievement, especially in achieving the goals of Mid Term Plan by year 2016 and beyond.

1.7 Scope of Study

The aims of this AR is not only to explore and determine the behaviours of HOB leadership and management skill in leading the implementation of Lead Management, but also to understand its influence on sales force performance. The scope for this study would be focusing on the task level of the branch sales operation at the five branches within TCM Sarawak Region.

This study would examine the leadership capability, styles, approaches and competency of HOB in discharging his/her duties in the branch operation. Furthermore, the study would assist in developing processes of reengineering and transformation within the branch sales operation. The transformation involves changing of mindset and principle of sales management of the HOB.

1.8 Organization of Chapters

The thesis is organized in five chapters with the introduction of background of study in Chapter One, follow with literature review in Chapter Two. Chapter Three discuss practice-driven methodology namely action research. Chapter four is the analysis of findings of this study where data were collected, analyzed and evaluated. Chapter five will present the summary of this study and recommendations and actions to be taken.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This AR framework examines the relationships between the HOB leadership effectiveness, HOB management competencies, HOB organizational citizenship behavior and personal selling activities (Lead Management) of sales operation in the five branches of TCM Sarawak Region (Piercy, Cravens, and Lane, 2012). This AR would focus on the moderating role of HOB's leadership styles, planning and control competencies with regards to control-performance relationship and the impact of HOB attitude and behavior in executing the sales prospecting activities or lead management activities. The literature review on leadership styles shall address how these attributes can be associated with the sales manager's competencies to augment the effectiveness of implementing lead management activities of salespeople and also the extent of sales managers' management control processes so as to monitor and evaluate the sales force in executing the prospecting activities plan in order to achieve the branch and organizational objectives (Anderson and Oliver, 1987).

As pointed out in Chapter One that TCM's performance is the fundamental issue surrounding the survival of the organizations in such competitive environments in the automotive industry. To sustain good performance, the organizations need to have highly committed employees (Joo, Yoon and Jeung, 2012). Organization performance has become important factor that challenges employees to strive for effective ways of

achieving goals set by the organizations (Mehdi Jaffri, Sharif and Asif Khan, 2012). No doubt improved performance and productivity is the key of commitment, it cannot be achieved by a simple approach of manipulating employees' commitment and emotions. Today, employees would be able to realize such attempts very quickly. In particular, commitment is a two way communication: organizations must work to engage the employees, and employees will in turn have a choice about the level of commitment to offer the employer. Most importantly employers can do a great deal to impact on employee's level of commitment in order to strive for better performance. That is what makes it so important, as a tool for organization success.

Douglas Conant, CEO of Campbell (2001 – 2011) has turned around the company by investing in internal leadership of the company as he understands the importance of personal impact and the way to deploy the leadership in practice (cited by Kleiner, 2015). Leadership communication skill is of great importance in influencing employee productivity, job satisfaction, job performance and organization effectiveness (White, Campbell, and Kacmar, 2012; Clampitt and Downs, 1993; Pincus, 1986; Wheelless, Wheelless and Howard, 1984; Tubbs and Hain, 1979). It is similar to the three dimensions model of leadership as described by Reddin (1967) in explaining the effective leadership behavior. The effectiveness dimension of Reddin's model measures the degree to which a particular style, such as executive, developer, benevolent autocratic and bureaucratic, is appropriate and suitable to a given situation. Reddin's model of leadership differs from other models of leadership due to its emphasis of effectiveness as additional dimension. However, Reddin's model has

limited value in expressing its effectiveness in matching leadership behavior with a given situation. The said model should give more emphasis on situational factors that could influence the appropriateness of certain leadership behavior to a given situation. Trivellas and Drimoussis (2013) stated that different leadership approaches are required in different situations and environments as different leadership beliefs and values would influence the leadership styles under different circumstances. Leaders should be sensitive by adjusting and adapting to situations while in the process of building rapport with subordinates. Hence, leaders need to be aware of their vital roles to support the development of subordinates and foster a learning culture in the organization.

2.2 Lead Management

A sales lead is a person or an organization that has the interest to buy a product or service. It is the first step of a sales process, that is, lead generation which is conducted by both marketing and sales department (Monat 2011; Payne 1994; Jolson and Wotruba 1992). Sales leads are generated through showroom promotions activities, road shows at shopping malls, advertisement, and sales prospecting activities, examples: cold calls, territorial activities, customer visits and others. It takes time to identify and qualify sales leads into sales prospects (Ramakrishnan, et al., 2006). Typically, prospecting involves a process of nurturing the relationship through a period of time. This is recognized as the starting point of a sales funnel or sales pipeline. Prospecting is the fundamental step in the personal selling process. It involves the salespeople identifying a sufficient number of leads to be directly

contacted. As such prospecting is often considered to be extremely important to sales success. Successful salespeople are better able to identify and classify prospects.

Lead generation is an important element of sales organization (Monat, 2011). As defined by Monat (2011), a lead is any person who has expressed interest in the company's product or services. However, Urbaniak (2003) defined lead as a person or an organization who might possibly be a prospect. Urbaniak (2003) stated that a prospect is a person or organization who benefit from purchasing the product or services. A lead must be nurtured for a period of time and subsequently being qualified and can be classified as a prospect. The process of identifying potential buyers is known as lead generation (Ramakrishnan, et al., 2006). These definitions did not specifically state the significance of the executive role of the sales managers' leadership in generating the leads. However, no system could guarantee successful prospecting unless it is followed consistently so as to make it as an integral process in sales people's routine activities.

According to Payne (1994), CRM Process starts with prospecting. Sales prospecting activity is becoming a strategic process in which sales is made with the intention of building and maintaining a long term relationship. Today sales people are no longer an order-taker, instead being recognizes more as relationship manager. As quoted by Jolson and Wotruba (1992), poor sales performance was attributed by poor prospecting. Generating leads are considered as the first stage of a sales process of carrying out prospecting activities. Sales lead is the identity of a person or entity

potentially interested in purchasing a product or services. Sales leads are generated from either marketing activities such as trade shows, live seminars, direct marketing, advertising, mass mailing, referrals from friends and customers or from sales people prospecting activities like cold calling. Sales people carry out prospecting activities to search for contact or lead. Furthermore, Jolson and Wotruba (1992) indicated that the sales process begins with getting contacts or suspects and then progressing through prospects to qualify as leads. Hence, sales people must be aware and able to identify potential customers as all leads represent possible sales and they should be approached in an organized, systematic and structured manner. The purpose is to nurture these leads and increase the number of leads generated and convert these leads to sales. Effective prospecting is the key to long-term sales success. It is the beginning of the sales process.

Arokiasamy, Abdullah And Ismail (2015) concluded in their study that Malaysian school principals are required to understand the role of what information technology (IT) can contribute in their work if they want to be effective and successful in their managing roles in the school. In addition, Matzler, Uzelac and Bauer (2014) noted that our human minds are only able to process a limited amount of information at a given time. In business operation, manual processes have limitation to record and provide accurate and timely information required for decision making. Arokiasamy et al. pointed out that the school principals need to be proficient in IT usage in order to assist them to effectively analyze the information available. No doubt the scenario was related to school principal, however, the findings are also similar and applicable

in any other industry (McPhee, 2014). Similarly, Stanitec and Stygar (2014)'s review in their study of banking sales management control system, the use of IT has positive impact in the effective management of the bank especially the IT system supports the management in timely and rational decisions. These findings as concluded by Arokiasamy et al. and Stanitec and Stygar are relevant to the sales operation in automotive industry, especially in updating and recording of leads generated by the organization. Hence, sales leaders are required to use computer to effectively monitoring the sales and lead management activities. The sales leaders' competency and knowledge in IT is of great importance if they want to be successful and effective in leading the branch sales operation.

Lead Management Information System enable the frontline staff or sales management team (including sales force) to mobilize the movement of opportunities through the sales cycle (Widmier, et al., 2002). However, TCM's existing LM information system is not effective. As highlighted in Chapter One, Lead Management could also mean Opportunity Management as the process could proactively monitor the high volume of leads that could be converted into quality sales opportunities in the near future. However sales people, especially the sales managers need to assist the sales people to qualify and determine the right lead that would probably be converted into sales. The organization needs to spend lots of resources in developing leads and also making sure that marketing and sales team works together so that no lead is overlooked or dropped. Sales is moving away from the twentieth century of selling products and services model to a twenty-first century model of focusing on increasing

and building customer or prospect relationship by the sales people. Therefore the strategic alliance between sales and marketing becomes more significant in the lead management process of the organization. The opportunity pipeline (Appendix 1.8) starts with generating leads for the products. Therefore, it is important to build and proactively manage the sales pipeline by nurturing, tracking and following up with every lead. The sales force need to start to record and monitor all the leads collected and generated through both marketing communication and branch sales activities.

To support the twenty first century sales force, Moncrief, Marshall and Rudd (2015) opined that organization should invest into the advance technology to effectively manage the lead management process. They further pointed out that the younger generation of employees and customers are able to accept and embrace this new technology application. Speed to market is important to sales organization in a competitive market environment. The faster a potential prospect can be approached in the sales process of a purchase, the higher are the chances of converting that prospect into sales (Ramakrishnan et al., 2006). The important point behind B2C (business to customer), lead generation is that organization can direct lead or contact to specific products and services. In any organization, both marketing and sales teams are having sales lead generation activities and programs to support the operation. Being in the frontline, sales people are essential people to provide value added services for the customers and the lead/contacts generated (Beverland, 2001). Sales organization uses lead generation to create new customers. The sales process starts with prospecting to generate leads for the products. The frontline staffs need to start to record and

monitor all the leads collected and generated through both marketing communication programs and branch sales prospecting activities which include area coverage as it provides great opportunities for sales people to perform well (Grant, Cravens, Low and Moncrief, 2001). Accordingly, Churchill, Ford, Walker, Johnston and Tanner, (2000) pointed out the vital role of sales managers is to plan effectively on territory and market coverage as it has great impact on sales force morale and performance. A successful implementation of lead management requires thorough planning and focusing on processes and people who are taking the leading role in the sales team. Hence, the key role of sales managers is to proactively developing a sales plan for the sales operation.

As highlighted in Chapter One under scope of study, the aims of this AR is not only to explore and determine the behaviours of HOB leadership and management skill in leading the implementation of Lead Management, but also to understand its influence on sales force performance. Sales organization has to put in concerted effort in implementing this initiative of automating the sales process (prospecting activity) and strengthening the relationship with the potential customers (Crosby Evans and Cowles 1990). To the organization, a running sales operation is like an enigma. On one hand, it seems that sales teams are moving on the right direction. On the other hand, a running sales operation will never come right nor stay on track in its own accord. Both internal and external environment change would cause trouble to the smooth running of sales operation.

Sales are a confidence game whereby customers and sales team exchange money and products/services with one another (Allen, 2012). It is consistent with the definition of selling as an interactive, personal, paid promotional approach between a customer and seller (Tanner and Raymond 2010). Dixon and Tanner (2012) stated that selling is a multi process of pre-approach planning to post sale follow-up. According to Rackham (2011), selling is splitting into transactional encounters (mediated by technology) and other encounters requiring personal selling. However, with the emergence of advance technology, today's selling does not need sales people's involvement all the time. With the growth of online marketing, order processing and sales transactions are now effectively managed by the marketing team. On the other hand, the sales function is increasingly taking on a new turn of building relationship with the customers or prospects. The sales transactions are not merely selling of a product or services, but to provide product knowledge, information, coordinate delivery and customer services. In addition, sales transaction varies in the length, intensity and importance of any one step of the sales process, but the sales process is noted as though it were the same immutable path. However, the selling process in the automotive industry requires personal selling by sales people as not all customers are proficient in products with advance technology.

Sales are a process of interacting with others in order to build long term relationship (Barnes, 2012). Allen (2012) described that sales manager behavior and action in the sales process has great influenced on sales people self-efficacy. In many organization sales people are trained to use Need Base Selling technique in their day to day interaction with customers (Chai, Zhao and Babin, 2012). Leadership skills of sales

managers cannot be separated from their relationship skills because they are having constant interaction with the sales people every day. Typically, sales managers are required to ensure adequate coordination and provide sufficient support to the sales team in enforcing the sales plan. Furthermore, in order to ensure great success in the sales plan, leadership activities of sales managers could cover from monitoring and coordination of sales people to providing adequate feedback and guidance so that sales people could perform better.

2.2.1 Personal Selling

The competitive environments have made it very challenging for TCM to achieve the mid term goal. Schmitz and Ganesan (2014) pointed out that the current complex and competitive environments have made selling functions to be more complicated as customers are more demanding and expect more from the organization. They further highlighted that this complex selling situation has great impact on sales people's psychological and emotional well-being and thus affecting their job satisfaction and sales performance. In addition, Smith, Andras and Rosenbloom (2012) pointed out that sales managers' functions are becoming more difficult and challenging as not only they are facing with the demanding customers externally, but from their own sales people internally. They further highlighted that organizations are having more diverse group of sales force that are from different ethnic and cultures, social classes, education level, age and genders. Personal selling is an important driver of organization performance (Albers, Mantrala, and Sridhar 2008). Jones, Brown, Zolnes, and Weitz, (2005) stated that success of personal selling would depend on

sales manager's proactive responds of decision making in this fast changing environment. Past research suggested that sales managers always blamed the sales people for their failures (Dubinsky 1999). The comment made by Dubinsky is perfectly correct as it is very common to hear from sales managers that their sales people have failed to achieve their monthly targets. Traditionally, sales managers do not ensure adequate support to sales people in carrying out the prospecting activities. In addition, there are major gaps in their leadership activities relating to monitoring process, performance evaluation, effective coaching and mentoring of their sales people. As such, sales managers could push the buck to the sales people when performance does not meet the mark.

However, Dubinsky (1999) found that sales managers are responsible for all shortcomings of sales performance as they are in the position to evaluate, identify and monitor the external trends and internal strengthens and weaknesses of their sales. As such, from a sales perspective, personal selling process could lead to sales managers' effective sales strategies and sales force management control and activities. The personal selling processes involve prospecting, need assessment, product presentation, closing, delivery and follow up. Therefore, sales managers are required to master every step of the selling process in order to guide and coach the sales force effectively.

Prospecting is the first step of identifying leads or prospects. Pre-approach is the process of preparing the sales people to be competent in selling skill, product knowledge and professionalism in handling leads and prospect. Next, the approach is

where the sales people meet up with leads or prospects. When meeting the leads or prospect, sales people would start with both open-ended and close-ended questions to probe for their interests and needs in the purchase. Upon identifying and qualifying the leads, sales people can start making their product presentation and demonstration, based on FAB concept. FAB concept refers to Features, Advantages and Benefits of a product. When making presentation, sales people would seek for buying signal for closing. Should there be any objection from the prospects, sales people can apply the techniques to out-weigh any objection with the needs that have been identified earlier. After closing the deals, sales people are required to prepare the product for delivery. Finally, the last process is the follow up of the customers after product has been delivered. This is an important process that will ensure customer satisfaction and help to establish a long term relationship with the customer.

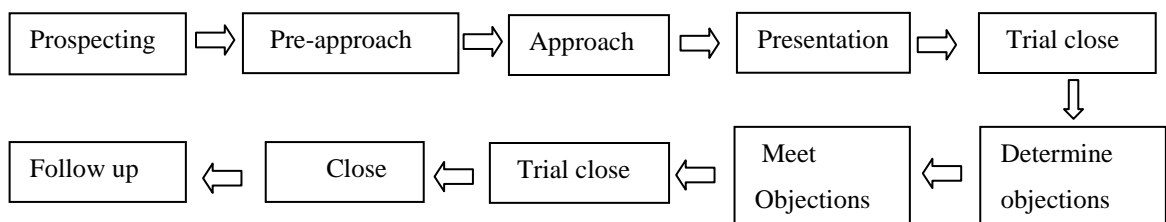
What makes a successful salesman? This question was one of the longest asked and incomplete answers given (Webster, 1968). A review of historical studies of salesman effectiveness provided an insight of a complex and more fruitful ways of examining personal selling function. Henry (1975) pointed out that sales leaders' activities, such as training, territory coverage, product knowledge and market can have great impact and influence on sales people's performance as they need to know and understand the plan and progress of sales people's activities. Accordingly, appropriate sales management attention is required to focus on sales people's behavior and positive impact on their behaviors and outcomes. Traditionally, very often, sales people would rely on introducers to recommend prospects for their deals. Hence, Henry's (1975)

remark is very relevant in the automotive industry selling approach. As such, sales managers are required to constantly monitor and evaluate sales people's performance.

Trivellas and Drimoussis (2013) opined that different leadership approaches are required in different situations and environments. In addition, they further stated that different leadership competency strengths would influence the leadership styles under different circumstances. However, Ingram, LaForge, Avila, Schwepker and Williams (2001) reminded that to be effective, different management techniques are needed for different selling situations, such as different types of intervention and different leadership styles are necessary to support and enhance sales people's performance (Donaldson, 1998).

Futrell (2002) proposed a much more comprehensive selling process (Figure 2.1), but rather quite similar frameworks of Barker (2001), Bingham and Gomes (2001), Miller and Layton (2000), Jobber and Lancaster (2000), Anderson and Narus (1999) and Dalrymple and Cron (1998) which is also very similar to the sales process framework of TCM (Appendix 1.9).

Figure 2.2
A Traditional Framework of Selling Process



Source: Futrell (2002)

Futrell (2002), has emphasized on the development of customer-supplier relationships and thus creating a customer relationship process which is considered to be important and complex in the implementation step within the selling process. Most selling frameworks mentioned above have a relationship selling foundation. However, successful relationship marketing needs more than just effective sales people who are able to establish a network of partnerships, but physical goods and services are equally important in the entire selling process. On the contrary, Cannon and Perreault (1999) and Gronroos (1997) argued that relationship selling is not appropriate in some situations and it is not universal as some transactions do not need relationship marketing approach. Manning and Reece (2001) concurred that transaction-based buyer is focusing on low price, and focusing mainly on getting immediate sales and does not need relationship selling.

However, Manning and Reece (2001) provided a much more comprehensive selling framework (Figure 2.2) than those that were highlighted by Jobber and Lancaster (2000) and Futrell (2002). Manning and Reece's framework portrays a strategic and consultative approach in the personal selling process. It is a combination of strategic planning and consultative selling practices. Nevertheless, these three frameworks do not appear to be contradictory to one another. They are all being consistent with elements of marketing concept where sales people identify and try to meet or satisfy customer needs.

Ingram et al. (2001), having similar framework of Manning and Reece (2001), commented that there are numerous versions of selling process in terms of numbers

of steps and the names of steps. Generally, no framework has explained which steps should be omitted during repeat sales, and also which steps need more or lesser emphasis in a different situation, such as dealing with an individual prospect or an organization. However, the various intensions of the sales process are the same, except that some might advocate higher pressure on how to get customers to close the deals, instead of focusing on meeting their needs. The above reviews of the sales process provide the foundation to be used to assist in determining the process of implementing lead management activities in Chapter 4 and 5. The following six-step selling framework (Figure 2.2) is rather similar to TCM’s sales process.

Figure 2.3

The Six-Step Selling Framework

<i>Step One: Approach</i>	<i>Review selling framework</i> <i>Initiate customer contact</i>
<i>Step Two: Presentation</i>	<i>Determine prospect needs</i> <i>Select product or services</i> <i>Initiate sales presentation</i>
<i>Step Three: Demonstration</i>	<i>Decide what to demonstrate</i> <i>Select selling tools</i> <i>Institute demonstration</i>
<i>Step Four: Negotiation</i>	<i>Anticipate buyer concerns</i> <i>Plan negotiation methods</i> <i>Initiate double-win negotiation</i>
<i>Step Five: Close</i>	<i>Plan appropriate closing methods</i> <i>Recognize closing clues</i> <i>Initiate closing methods</i>
<i>Step Six: Servicing the Sale</i>	<i>Suggestion selling</i> <i>Follow through</i> <i>Follow up calls</i>

Source: Manning and Reece (2001)

Today, to remain successful in this highly competitive environment and the trend of increasing customer churn rates, the role of relationships exchange plays a prominent part in the marketing mix strategy. To compete effectively, organizations are required to initiate customer retention and loyalty programs that satisfy customers' unique needs (Golalikhani and Karwan, 2013; Chai et al., 2012). A recent meta-analysis revealed that investments in sales people provide greater returns than advertising expenditures, (Albers et al., 2008), which reflects the crucial role of relationships in exchange. Slater and Olson (2000) pointed out the important role of sales force management in the marketing activities as it could affect the selling strategy, sales force structures and control framework. Hence, effective sales force management is one of the key business strategies as it would allow the sales operation to perform efficiently and thus increasing productivity. As sales managers, they are supposed to manage, and not to sell. However, due to great pressure of seeking for final results, all sales managers choose to sell by stepping in to help the sales people and also taking over the selling themselves. Probably because of their own expertise, it is natural enough for them to take over that role of selling.

Personal selling and sales management are important factors in marketing (Baldauf et al., 2001; Atuahene-Gima and Michael, 1998). According to Spiro and Weitz (1990), personal selling is a unique communication channel in marketing. The competitive environmental pressures have triggered many organizations to enhance the effectiveness of marketing strategy implementation and sales people's productivity (Cannon and Perreault, 1999; Grant and Cravens, 1999). Strategy implementation is the match between business strategy and marketing policy. Marketing has its

prominent role in creating customer value (Day, 1992). The American Marketing Association revised its definition of marketing in 2004 (Palmatier 2008) and highlighted that marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders. In addition, Gronroos's (1997) and Sheth and Parvatiyar's (2000) marketing definitions highlighted three important aspects of relationship marketing, they are, 1) engagement activities in the relationship lifecycle; 2) focusing on relationship marketing activities; and 3) the objectives of relationship marketing activities is to offer value to both the seller and the buyer. In essence, relationship marketing is a process of long-term relationships build on personal and social exchange. The exchange of bonds could enhance customers' values and satisfaction which focuses on the interactive character of relationships building.

2.3 Sales Management

Sales leaders play critical role in organization as they serve as bridges between top management and sales force. Rapp, Ogilvie and Bachrach (2015) pointed out that sales leaders' main task is to execute strategic activities designed for the sales operation so as to ensure success in the short- and long-term organization goals. Based on past experiences and knowledge acquired, sales leaders have the ability to develop strategic plans and make wise decision for the organization (Lord, Dinh and Hoffman, 2015). Fayol (1949) was the first modern management scientist that profound a theoretical concept of what managers should do and by what principles

that they have execute it. He defined management as a broad plan of operations of the business, with assembling personnel, coordinating and harmonizing efforts and activities in order to achieve organizational objectives. According to Fayol (1949), management function consists of forecasting, planning, organizing, commanding, coordination and controlling. However, Stroh, Northcraft and Neale (2002) argued that forecasting function is considered part of planning process. Hence, Stroh et al. opined that management operates through these five functions. These basic management functions are crucial in enhancing lead management.

According to Vuksic, Bach and Popovic (2013), in order for organization to remain competitive, great measures are required to monitor and evaluate the performance of the sales team. They further pointed out that the measurement of organization's performance is an important process in ensuring the achievement of organizational desired goals. Sales managers' role of supervision on sales people is to articulate the vision for the organization and expectations on sales people and also to monitor sales people performance compared to expectations. This AR considered the sales management element of the marketing mix because sales management is the primary form of promotion for business marketers. It is the activity that most uniquely belongs to marketing processes.

To be effective in sales management control of sales activities, sales people need to understand the linkages and relationships between sales behavior and outcome (Ingram et al. 2001). In addition, Rosenbaum (2000) pointed out that many sales people like to hide what they are doing and often contradict the directives of sales

managers. Rosenbaum (2000) further stated that these sales people always focus on activities that they feel more relevant and appropriate than following the directions given by the sales management. It is very real and common in the automotive selling atmosphere whereby sales people always 'wait' for customers to walk-in, instead of going out (from showroom) to look for prospects. Therefore, sales managers need to organize sales activities to generate leads and prospects through networking follow up with prospects and customers, cold canvassing, road shows and so on. However, sales people are more interested with networking through old customers and introducers or spotters, rather than going for cold canvassing and road shows as it takes time to identify potential prospects for sales.

Anderson and Oliver (1987) viewed that sales force control system are outcome-based and behavior-based. Outcome-based control refers to the end results of sales activities. It means sales people determine their own appropriate action in achieving the objectives. They are considered to be self-sufficient in understanding and responding to market environment. However, behavior-based control systems focus on the monitoring of sale force activities. Sales managers are required to take control and influence the sales force behaviors in order to achieve the desired goals. The control system is a set of procedures for monitoring, directing, evaluating, and compensating its sales force. The behavior-based control will enhance and do better in meeting organizational goals. Such control system is a key management tool in sales as it is able to influence sales people's attitude, behavior, motivate them to perform better in order to achieve company's desired goals and objectives.

In such highly competitive and rapid changing environments, sales force is recognized as an important factor in improving organizational performance (Baldauf and Cravens, 1999). The results of their study of 159 sales managers in 79 Austrian companies indicated that there was a better effectiveness in organizations that applied sales force management in directing and monitoring prospecting activities as compared to those that did not utilize this same management tool. Nevertheless, Grant and Cravens (1996) had also confirmed in their study that sales people who do well on behavioral components will ultimately display higher outcome performance. It was rather exciting to note that the survey or study proved that these companies' sales forces have shown significant differences in their performances. Furthermore the sales people's behavior and outcome performance were rated higher in the organizations that utilized effective sales force. Typically, the sales people's performance would definitely improve when the sales managers have provided adequate coordination, infrastructure, feedback, effective coaching and guidance for their sales team. Hence, the proactive behaviors of sales managers could inspire and encourage their sales people to strive for a higher performance.

However, Slater and Olson (2000) reminded in their study that the achievement of sales force management , by itself, will not guarantee the success of the sales achievement as the process requires a more comprehensive execution of strategies from other functional level within the organization. It means that sales force management is vital to the successful implementation of business strategy. The use of sales force control system has great impact on motivation and influence of

salesperson performance (Mantrala, Albers, Caldieraro, Jensen, Joseph, Krafft, Narasimhan, Gopalakrishna, Zoltners, Lal and Lodish 2010). In addition, Weitz and Bradford (1999), and Wortruba (1991) viewed that knowledge-based control system has a stronger effect on sales people's performance. They pointed out that the role of sales people has changed from pure order taking to partnering with customers and prospects. Makoto (2009) stated that knowledge-based control is a process-based control that includes both behavior-based (activity-based) and capability-based control. Challagalla and Shervani (1996) stated that behavior-based control refers to activities of sales people to perform and monitor of actual behavior, including the administering of rewards and punishment based on the performance of the desired activities. On the other hand, capability control reiterate on the improving of sales people's competencies through better skill and abilities. It involves the skill of setting goals and abilities in providing guidance for improvement and rewarding and punishing individuals. However, Reagans and McEvily (2003) argued that knowledge-based control would depends on organization's ability to effectively transfer and sharing knowledge from other departments to the sales people. Therefore, the information and knowledge available to sales people is critical and vital in achieving and sustaining a competitive advantage as it leads to better sales performance by improving decision making and enhancing better coordination and collaboration. As such, it is of great importance for senior management to provide adequate training to enhance sales managers' competencies and skills so that they are able to function effectively.

According to Marlow and Nass-Fukai (2000) and Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, and Donohue (2003), the definition of collaboration is shared decision making. Working together in an alliance can enhance commitments and thus developing ownership in decision making process. Traditionally, employees work as a team in all departments and able to share and solve problems together, but sales people do not work as a team even though they are in the same team (Jonsson and Jeppesen, 2012). Being a sales person, he/she needs to sell/deliver the products by his/her own efforts as everyone has a different target to achieve. There was no sharing of sales knowledge and information about customers with the team. Sales people are selfish in nature as they have their own targets to accomplish. There is fear of price 'under-cutting' and sabotaging of sales transaction. As such, sales people do not share information with regards to their leads or prospects in hands with the sales team.

Dixon and Tanner (2012) suggested that selling is a human-driven interaction between and within individuals/organizations in order to bring about economic exchange. This definition is in contrast to the tradition definition of sales that emphasize on promotion function and communicating about a product, rather than focusing on the economic exchange of human interaction (Rackham and DeVincentis, 1999). There is a need for transformational change in the selling approach, hence the current scenario has made it more urgent for the sales people to change the selling approaches to engage in nurturing relationship and collaborate with customers. As such, sales people need to be motivated and coached for

relationship building process and not merely to control and manage them for sales alone.

Leh and Abdullah (2014) highlighted that coaching is an effective mechanism in developing subordinates' competencies and skills. According to Harmon, Brown, Widing, and Hammond, (2002), sales people are more productive and effective when sales managers provide adequate mentoring and coaching to them. Coaching is defined as the process of equipping people with the tools, knowledge, and opportunity they need and become more effective (Peterson and Hicks 1996). Indeed it is of great importance for sales leaders to train their sales people and help them to discover the knowledge, skills and inspiration that they need to excel and to reach even greater levels of success in sales. By coaching, sales leaders move people along and help them to identify gaps in their sales competency. Furthermore, sales leaders' coaching would assist the sales people in developing sales plans that are necessary for further levels of success. However, to be effective in coaching, leaders need to focus on the communication process with the subordinates.

D'Abate, Eddy, and Tannenbaum, (2003) stated that coaching is a goal directed interaction between a coach and his/her followers. Morgeson (2005) reiterated that coaching is a day to day interaction of leaders and followers in pursuing the common goals set by constantly having dialogue with subordinates (Goleman, 2000). Leaders' ability in making sound and good decision is no longer depended on traditional learning process, but instead being coach by the 'expert' (Ben-Hur, Kinley and

Jonsen, 2012). Further, Dixon and Tanner (2012) stated that today's sales people are the architect of change and they need coaching more than just understanding their shortcoming in performance by their sales managers. To bring about changes that are strategically aligned with the organization processes requires more than just the knowledge and understanding of what needs to be done by the employees (Fugate, Prussia and Kinicki, 2012). Due to the inherent complexity of organizational change and employees' experience, both human resource management and sales management need to focus on the differentiated effects on the factors of employees' commitment and resistance to change. Sales managers need to set clear direction and develop plans to lead the sales people in order to strive for excellence performance by the team. They are required to play a motivational role to inspire the sales people to perform better.

Furthermore, culture is a crucial factor in implementing coaching strategy successfully in an organization. There needs to be a cultural change that supports the coaching approach. Hands-on expertise and guide in practicing the new ways of doing things requires the help of expert coach. Ben-Hur et al., (2012) strongly suggested the use of both process solution of effective discussion and insight solution of getting a coach or mentor in helping the group in decision making. Successful coaching happens in an environment of trust and respect between the sales managers and sales staff. It is only when the staff trust and respect their leaders will they be willing to obey and follow the instructions of the managers. In the automotive industry, sales managers are always being promoted from rank and file, that is, from

salesmen to sales managers. As such they are incompetent to act as the expert coach in the sales operation.

Olumoko, Abass and Dansu (2012) pointed out that a product of modern technologies, like motor vehicles, could not sell by itself or through the internet as customers need to be informed and discussed of not only the features, but the usage and benefits of the products. However, today's advance technology do allow consumer to do transaction without the involvement of sales people. In today's high technological environment, customers are better informed about the products when compared two decades ago. With the emergence of IT, selling process has changed; not only customers could identify product features, but compare across with competitors in the internet (Chi, Chung and Tsai (2011). Hence, prospecting today is very much different as compared twenty years ago. Today, more than ever, prospects are resistant and hostile when they are being contacted by sales people, especially those that they are not familiar with. The age of the internet has made the customers more knowledgeable than ever before about the products and services available to their needs and wants. However, sales knowledge that comprised of information with regards to lead/prospects, sales situation and necessary strategies and, adaptive selling that include sales behavior according to customer situation are two key factors that are impacted by usage of advance technologies. These factors have changed the sales process as sales people need to be knowledgeable about respective products and services. Hence, they are required to continuously learn and improve their knowledge about the products features (know-why), advantage of products (know-how) and suitable to who (know-who).

Blocker, Cannon, Panagopoulos, and Sager (2012) stated that in order to gain in-depth information about customer's expectations, sales people are the best channel of communication that could help organization to build up strong and lasting customer satisfaction, loyalty and trust. Marketing intelligence is the ability to gather information from both internal and external environment relating to company's strategic decision making process (Gholamreza, Alireza and Hesam 2011). Sales people are important channel of information and could contribute significantly to developing marketing intelligence (Le Bon and Merunka, 2006; Webster 1965). As such, organization needs to develop structured processes to encourage sales people to actively participate in gathering valuable information for the company. DeCarlo, Rody, and DeCarlo (1999) highlighted that it is vital to enhance relationship between sales managers and sales people as they are considered as critical contributors in generating organization revenues. The sales people are considered as the most important element in the company's communication process (Atuahene and Michael, 1998). Personal Selling is a channel of communication in marketing management (Spiro and Weitz, 1990). However, Nasri and Charfeddine (2012) pointed out that it is not easy to influence and change sales people's attitude to gather and provide valuable information to the organization. Due to their frequent follow up with customers, prospects and leads, sales people can gather a flow of information, such as needs, wants, preferences and issues relating to quality of product and services. The information is valuable to marketing or sales department to make better decision. Nevertheless, sales people are always reluctant to provide and share the information, unless they are rewarded and recognized for such strategic feedback. Hence it is vital for organization to better understand how the sales people can be motivated for

strategic role of gathering good information about competitors, about customers' needs, wants and preferences.

At the macro-economic level, selling activities are undertaken by a large proportion of the working population within developed countries. In 1998 there were approximately 15 million salespeople, making up 12 percent of all jobs in the United States (Farrell and Hakstian, 2001). At the financial level, sales activities often constitutes a substantial part of total marketing costs (Craven, Grant, Ingram, LaForge and Young, 1992). To some companies, selling costs could even contribute to almost fifty percent of total marketing costs (Barker, 1997). Hence, sales managers often are responsible for key resources of a company, having potential to influence the business outcomes (Deeter-Schmetzl, Kennedy and Goebel 2002). Indeed it is the sales manager's key responsibilities to invest their valuable hours in organizing more sales promotional activities that could generate sales revenues for the organization. The organization could not depend on marketing department's promotional activities to generate sales performance as very often customers and prospects require sales people to make direct contact and presentation before signing the deal. More so in the automotive industry, the products introduced are very much based on high technology that require sales people's personal explanation and clarification before a client could accept the product.

Victor and Otiso (2013) pointed out that the sales force performance refers to the number of new customers received and the number of lost customers in a given period. And also, sales force performance, satisfaction and commitment constitute a

crucial factor of company overall performance (Yilmaz, 2002). Above all, frontline sales people contribute significantly to company performance in terms of sales volume, revenue, profits and customer satisfaction (Baldauf, Cravens, and Grant 2002). The role of sales people are becoming more strategic as they are not just to sell product and services, but to manage customer relationship, to do pre and post-delivery follow up and also to be responsible for the profit for the outlet. Therefore it is of great importance that for sales people to succeed in sales process, they require knowledge not just the unique selling features of a product, competitive advantages, product issues, and delivery timelines, but also the selling activities of prospecting that lead them to sales in the long term.

Bobby and Kenneth's (2009), Smythe's (2008), Chang's (2006), Crawford's (2006) and Bandura's (1997) description of Self-evaluations, engagement of employees goal setting, and increasing workplace optimism concurred with Joo et al. (2012) and Medhi Jaffri et al. (2012) that they are key attributes in influencing and contributing towards employees affective commitment and performance. Affective commitment refers to employees' loyalty and involvement towards an organization where they would strive towards achieving organization objectives (Hawass, 2012). Sheaffer (2015) pointed out that with high levels of affective commitment, employees are more engaged and committed to the organization and thus enhancing the overall effectiveness of the organization. In addition, Wright, Christensen and Isett (2013) highlighted that employees with high levels of affective commitments are able to accept and support new changes in the organization. As such, it is of great importance

for the sales managers to capitalize on their leadership position to influence and motivate employees to face challenging tasks encountered by them. Successful managers would use their leadership strengths effectively to enhance employees' affective commitment to the organizations.

According to Mehdi Jaffri et al., (2012), with the setting of goal, obtaining employees' engagement, having conducive working environment, positive employee behavior, the employee commitment of organization can be strengthened and enhanced. They further suggested that employee self-efficacy has great impact towards employees' optimistic approach in an organization. They defined self-efficacy as employee's belief and confidence to perform a task. In addition, they pointed out that in order to gain better organizational commitment it is important to improve employee engagement at work place. Organizational commitment is influenced by the value of interpersonal relationship and bonding within the organization. Researchers such as Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian, (1974) have defined organizational commitment as the relative strength of an individual's identification with an involvement in a particular organization. The above definitions shared the same conclusion that employees' affective state of commitment that could influence their understanding of organizational values and motivating them to remain loyal to the organization. As social human beings, we build friendships with others. In such manner, it is a human process of bonding and being connected with one another. More so, effective leaders deal with people and their dynamics, which are continually changing.

Goal setting has great influence on employee engagement and impact on employee performance (Latham, 2007). Gubman (2004) described that employee engagement is employee's commitment to work voluntarily for the organization. Engagement of employee means that employee would work harder or more than his/her job requirements (Tritch, 2003). Goal setting is a vital factor in enhancing organizational commitment to obtain positive engagement of employee in the organization (Knight, Durham, and Locke, 2001; Dweek, Hong, and Chiu, 1993; Locke, 1968). Goal setting is important and necessary in every department of an organization (Zabaracki, 1998; Muczyk and Reimann, 1989; Odiorne, 1978). To achieve better performance in an organization, it is necessary to ensure that employees are set with proper direction and target so as to enhance their commitment at work place. Therefore, target or goal setting needs to be effectively set so that it will lead to better performance by the employees. The goal setting process is done according to the different tasks in each department of an organization. When employees are satisfied with the goal set, it will positively strengthen their commitment and thus enhance their performance. Effective sales leaders often reach important new insights about their subordinates by challenging them to stretch for higher goals. It is the challenging task of sales leaders to inspire the sales people to draw their greatest strengths out in order to achieve the higher goals set.

Sales people commitment is not only a consequence of trust from leadership, but also a determinant of organizational behaviors (Barraud-Didier, Henninger and El Akremi, 2012). Newell, Joseph, Michael and Richard (2011) emphasized that perceptions of trust, personal relationship behaviors and consultative behaviors are

major factors of sales people's behavior that can influence customer loyalty. Hence, the sales managers and the sales force must have a fairly good understanding of the customers' needs and are competent on the selling job. It is important in today's competitive, fast paced market environment as the sales organization cannot afford to have sales people that are unable to deliver excellence service to the customers as ineffective sales people directly lead to low customer satisfaction and thus poor customer retention in the long run.

However, employees commitment would be impacted by the challenging task and competitive environment and thus forcing them to opt for a lower goal and even withdrawing themselves from the task (Vande Walle, Cron, and Slocum, 2001). Needless to say, sales people are always careful in setting their respective goals fearing that management might impose heavy punishment on those who have failed to achieve the goals set. As such, it is vital for sales leaders to have close relationship with the sales team in order to give them confidence when trying to get their commitments. Allen and Meyer (1996) stated that employee's commitment refers to their feelings towards the organization and highly possible that the employees would be loyal and remain in the organization (Whitener and Walz, 1993). However, sales manager could play important role in motivating sales people and driving them for a higher performance and thus making them loyal to the organization. Hence, sales managers need to provide adequate planning to drive the sales people to achieve the desired goals.

According to Mihelic (2014), employees' turnover intentions are closely related to their level of job satisfaction. Sales function traditionally has a higher rate of turnover due to high level of job stress (Milbourn (2012). According to Kemp, Borders and Ricks (2013), the positive working environments of an organization have great impact on sales people's motivation. Their findings have shown that sales managers' support, such as words of encouragement, feedback on performance, rewards, recognitions, have helped to create positive working environment in the organization. Hence, manager support to the sales people is critical in creating positive working environment as sales people are constantly facing with task pressures and rejection from clients. Therefore, the manager's supportive intervention can ease and prevent high burnout among sales people. The ever demanding role of performing well in the sales operation has put great pressure and job stress on sales people (Goad and VanMeter, 2012). More so the sales people are constantly being pressured to achieve their respective goals set every month. Hence, sales leaders are always in the mode of pushing hard on the sales people so that they are conscious of the targets set. As such, leaders are either directly or indirectly being 'forced' to use autocratic style of leadership which is very common in the frontline sales operation.

In addition, Jaramillo, Mulki and Boles (2011)'s finding confirmed that work overload and interpersonal conflict have great impact on employees' stress and resulted in emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction and negative behaviors, especially to the salespeople as they are required to handle complex demands from both coworkers and customers. However, Goad and VanMeter (2012) found that wellness programs could moderate sales people lifestyle and thus resulting in a lower level of

emotional exhaustion and increasing their job satisfaction. Job stress would impact employee motivation and ultimately sales performance (Wu and Shih, 2010). And, Rutherford, Boles, Hamwi, Madupalli and Rutherford (2009) viewed that in the worst scenario, it increases the turnover intentions. Researchers have found high level of stress has negative impact on job satisfaction and ultimately lead to high turnover rates (Terry, Nielsen and Perchard, 1993). It is well recognized that sales function is an importance process within the organization and turnover in sales is always a problem for organizations. Both direct and indirect costs as a result of high staff turnover could be substantial. Direct costs incur on hiring and training of new staff (direct costs) and indirect costs incur due to loss of loyal customers who are lured away by sales people who have left.

Chuang, Judge and Liaw (2011) have suggested that organization should pay special attention in the selection and development of transformational leaders who are involved with frontline salespeople as they are effective in motivating salespeople to perform better and ultimately lead them to stay loyal with the organization. Research has shown that high turnover of salespeople has threatened the organization in getting the best and competent talents in the market place as sales people are difficult to find (Traves, Brockbank, and Tomlinson, 1997). Therefore, sales managers need to take appropriate action and pay sufficient attention to the retention rates of sales forces in the organization (Boles, Dudley, Onyemah, Rouzies, and Weeks, 2012). Clearly, sales manager could use a range of approaches to inspire and motivate sales people to stay loyal to the organization. The different approaches would depend on the experiences and cultural background of the individual sales people. Effective sales

leaders would do everything they possibly could as a leader to help the sales people succeed in their sales performances. Regular reviews of their performances are not only served as opportunities to correct mediocre performances, but also allow sales leaders the platform to encourage and motivate sales people to excel and exceed in the expectations of their performances. Such an upward review can increase the confidence of the sales people and lay out a possible increase of their responsibility and commitment.

Traditionally, to increase sales productivity, sales organization would focus on the increasing of sales people, selection, training, and motivating of the sales team. Such approach is equally important in enhancing the sales people productivity (LaForge, Cravens, and Young, 1985). Furthermore, LaForge and Cravens (1982) pointed out that sales organizations did not pay much attention on strengthening selling effort deployment strategy as a source of improving sales productivity. Their findings have confirmed that good long term deployment strategy has great impact on increasing sales productivity. However, the inefficient deployment of sales people would cause the personnel practices to be ineffective in enhancing the sales force productivity.

2.4 Leadership

Spisak, O'Brien, Nicholson and Van Vugt (2015) highlighted that leadership plays an important role in ensuring organizational competitiveness and success, and yet leadership theory is considered to be underdeveloped for centuries. From the earliest Confucius teaching of leadership to contemporary theorists and practitioners,

leadership has been considered as the main factor for delivering high performance in an organization. Ma and Tsui (2015) pointed out that Confucianism leadership guides the subordinates with government orders and emphasized on the ethics of working hard for the organization. In addition, these leaders demonstrated their long term loyalty for the organization. On the other hand, Dailey (2012) defined contemporary leadership as the application of power and example to induce followers to pursue shared objectives which lead to the fulfillment of security and survivability needs and achievement of status aspirations. However, critics has warned and stated that leader power and mere authority are two different things. Power is the ability of a leader to influence the beliefs and actions of his followers. On the contrary, authority is the right given to a manager to achieve the objectives of the organization. It is a right to get the things done through his/her subordinates. And also, it is a right to make decisions.

There is no general agreement in the opinion of leadership definition due to its complexity (Yukl, 2006). Based on Northouse (2007), leadership is a process in influencing a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. In addition, De Jong and Den Hartog (2007) stated that leadership is the process of influencing others in achieving the desired goal. However, Piaw and Ting (2014) opined that effective leaders needed to be creative in strategic thinking in order to make strategic direction for the organization. Their study has implied that leaders were not born, but instead being influenced and shaped in their leadership behaviors by demographic variables within the organization. On the contrary, Yukl (2006) mentioned that leadership is inherent and confined to people who have special talents with which they are born.

Leadership is also perceived as a process that implies and suggests leadership can be learned (Northouse, 2007; Jago, 1982). A leader steps up in times of difficult situations, and is able to set direction and act creatively in moments of crisis. Unlike management, leadership cannot be taught, although it may be learned and enhanced through coaching or mentoring. Past history recorded that despite over 70 years of scientific and systematic study of leadership theory, and yet there is still debate on its complexity (Conger and Kanungo, 1998a). Barker (1997) pointed out that Burns (1978) was trying to change the emphasis from leaders to leadership as stated in his definition of leadership which state that leadership is the reciprocal process of mobilizing, by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers. Barker (1997) further argued that in the subsequent years, very little study was done on leadership theory and instead leadership was left as a mere slogan and correlated it with economic success by influencing people and management. In the end, Leadership was made to mire in traits, behaviors, roles and styles of leaders in an organization. As such we should be focusing and exploring more on the interplay between leadership, values, and performance, and not merely on traits, capabilities and styles of leaders. More specifically, we should examine how the presence or absence of values in a leader may define his or her character and also the performance for both the leader and organization. The relative importance of the most valuable qualities in leadership behaviors are honesty, forward-looking, competent and inspiring. People want leaders who possessed high quality of credibility as it is the foundation of effective

leadership. Credibility makes a difference in the leaders as it has great impact and influence on employees' attitudes and behaviors in the organization.

Yukl (1999) disagreed with Barker (1997)'s critical comments on scholars that do not define leadership and stated that there are common characteristics of leadership definition, namely, most definition of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional influences exerted by one person over other people to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organization. These many different views have narrowed the leadership definition as an act of either directly or indirectly in influencing and facilitating processes. Osborn et al. (2002) concurred in his leadership definition that leader apply incremental influence either directly or indirectly in order to change the current dynamics of a system. The challenge of leadership is to create change and facilitate growth. This had given extra weight in emphasizing not only on the incremental act of influencing individuals or groups, but also in enhancing the systems of an organization. Leadership is about influence in human activities and a process of interaction between leaders and subordinates trying to influence the followers in achieving the common goals.

However, Deichmann and Stam (2015) argued that the same leadership styles might not yield the same outcomes as they are depended on the leaders' personal values and beliefs in a given situation. While leaders might have democratic approach in place, he could also apply transactional leadership style at the same time to direct subordinates to get things done. Deichmann and Stam further highlighted that it is not

an easy task for leaders to predict subordinates' understanding and acceptance of the desired goals so that they are able to effectively motivate and influence them to achieve. Leadership perspective is not an easy topic, but so complicated that no one has an answer to it for such a long period (Fiedler, 1996). The subject of leadership can be overwhelming and confusing: Where does leadership start? What should we do first? What process should we use? How can we gain influence with others? The conceptualization of leadership as a social process has evolved over time with the shifting from initial leader-centric trait based concepts and individual-level skills, to dyadic superior-subordinate relationships (Bass, 1985).

Early research on leadership focused on styles, traits, behaviors and personality patterns that differentiated leaders from non-leaders (Fiedler, 1996). However, subsequent research and studies on leadership traits were not able to replicate these findings and the research to identify universal leadership traits was futile (House and Aditya, 1997). Jago (1982) argued that leaders should be in a better position to neutralize the conflicting and challenging situations. It seems that leadership definition is beginning to focus more on the importance of ethical or moral leadership, instead of pure styles, traits and behaviors of leadership. Ethical leadership that demonstrates high moral value could garner respect and trust from subordinates. The stronger are the quality of moral values, the greater are the loyalty of subordinates have for their leaders.

According to DeConinck (2015), leaders with ethical behaviors serve as role model and able to have direct influence on employees' ethical behaviors in the work place.

The findings of their study have shown that leaders with ethical values and behave ethically have great impact on salespersons' understanding of being well accepted in the organization and reduce the salespersons' turnover intentions. They further pointed out that it is very unlikely that salespersons would look for another job when they found that their leaders have demonstrated high level of ethical behaviors. Ethical leadership is to know your core values and having the courage to practice them in the daily work in an organization. Ethical leadership involves leading in a manner that respects the rights and dignity of others. However, Decoster, Stouten and Tripp (2014) pointed out that self-serving behavior of leaders always demonstrate the unethical practices of putting self interest above the interests of subordinates. It is very common in the automotive industry whereby the branch leaders have abused their authority in using the discounts and margin for personal gain, especially in determining market prices of trade-in used car. Ethical leaders would ensure that ethical practices are performed in the organization. Nafei (2015) pointed out that unethical behaviors, such as deception, favoritism and nepotism have negative impacts on organization, and especially employees might get lower job satisfaction, poor performance and turnover intention. Hence, there is an urgent need to enhance the ethical standards of the leaders so that employees are motivated and work harder to improve sales productivity. With low ethical and moral values, leaders would not earn respect and trust from subordinates. As a result, they would not be able to inspire and influence subordinates to perform and strive for higher productivity.

Traditionally, leadership's main goal is to increase productivity and revenue for the company. However, this concept has changed over time and begun to move towards

the responsibility of ensuring standards of moral and ethical conduct. Scholars have argued that leaders must maintain a moral reputation and demonstrate moral behavior in the organization (Aristotle, 2011; Solomon, 1992). Similarly, Zhu, Avolio, Riggio and Sosik (2011) and Trevino, Hartman and Brown (2000) opined that transformational leaders have positively strengthened employees' moral consciousness and inspire them to demonstrate ethical behaviors. However, leaders themselves are required to demonstrate an ability to facilitate morality as a means of getting employees' commitment. With ethical behaviors, leaders then only can influence followers' motivation and inspire them to be committed to the organization.

Fehr, Yam and Dang (2015) defined ethical leadership as demonstrating behavior that is positively moralized. They further highlighted that moralization is the process through which followers observe leaders' behaviors and actions. Positive moralization means followers perceived leaders' behavior as morally right and it has great influence in followers' subsequent behaviors and actions. Fehr et al. further argued that moralization of leaders' behaviors varies between each individual as it depends on the circumstances and situations at a given time and place. Leaders' behaviors and actions need to be aligned with moral values, such as care/harm, fairness/cheating, loyalty/betrayal, sanctity/degradation, authority/subversion and liberty/oppression (Haidt, 2012). Subordinates would be motivated through the process of witnessing leaders behave and act with high moral values and will also acknowledge them as role model of leaders with moral principle.

Successful leaders communicate and demonstrate the organization's strategic direction to the employees (Hirsch, 2014; Havlicek and Roubal, 2013; Wictor and Anderson, 2012). It is important for leaders to effectively communicate all strategic transformational messages to all front-line employees. Hence, leaders are required to possess good communication skill in order to effectively sharing the organization long term vision and goals to subordinates. However, Geertshuis, Morrison and Cooper-Thomas (2015) argued that the quality of communication is depended on the degree of how the subordinates would respond to the superior. Their study has shown that the quality relationship between superior and subordinates is derived from upward communication of the subordinates. The studies of Houghton, Pearce, Manz, Courtright and Stewart, (2014) and Wang, Waldman and Zhang, (2014) have shown that shared leadership concept helped to communicate effectively to the team of employees. In addition, Liu, Hu, Li, Wang and Lin, (2014) highlighted that through shared leadership process, the team members are able to share responsibilities and information and, ultimately could influence and enhance team members' performance. This concept involved employees' teamwork and interaction among one another in order to strive for higher performance in the organization. According to Houghton et al. (2014), shared leadership is different from the conventional leadership approach as lower level employees are empowered to make decision. Furthermore, Amundsen and Martinsen (2014) pointed out that employees at the lower level would be motivated when they are empowered to make decision. Employees are empowered and recognized to be part of the decision making process such as making proposal on sales strategic program (Lassk, Ingram, Kraus and Di Mascio, 2012). Employee performance is an important element in driving the

organization towards achieving its desired goal (Sabir, Iqbal, Rehman, Kamran and Yameen, 2012). Leaders always strive and motivate employees to work towards achieving the strategic goals set by the organization. Leadership is being demonstrated in today's competitive environment through communication and collaboration with employees. It is vital to build strong personal relationship by winning the hearts and minds of the subordinates. Therefore the leadership ability to foster close collaboration and effective communication are vital in leadership social exchange quality between superiors and employees.

The social exchange between leaders and employees has great impact on employees' job satisfaction. The manner to which the leaders engage in the exchange would depend on the extent of hostile verbal and nonverbal communication (Gabler, Nagy and Hill, 2014; Goebel, Deeter-Schmelz and Kennedy, 2013). The scope of leadership involves its purpose, opportunities and relationships between leaders and followers (McCaslin, 2001). According to McCaslin's (2001), leadership is a holistic theory of driving human potential to excel in their performance. Good and effective leadership will certainly benefit organization in the long run as they sets direction, motivating and challenging employees for better performance (Christine and Thompson, 2012). The importance of leadership in an organization has always been the interest of researchers as the foundation for progress and strong leadership is the cornerstone for success in organizations (Webb, 2007). Leadership has always been recognized as the key attributes in organization survival. Leaders pull the people together and getting them to buy-in the visions and strive towards achieving them. Furthermore, effective leaders are able to inspire the sales people to strive for a higher

goal in sales organization. Leadership, being a higher order value, sets itself apart from human nature and inspires hope, creativity, and empowerment to unmet human potential. Leadership is not just a simple combination of “charisma + confidence + likeability”! It is a complicated web of factors that could influence the culture and performance of an organization.

Pass researchers were focusing on traits in Leadership theories till the late 1940’s. At those times, researchers believed that people were born with inherited traits that suited for leadership. Attention and efforts were put on the studying of critical traits (Figure 2.3) demonstrated by successful leaders (Stogdill, 1974).

Figure 2. 4

<i>Leadership Traits</i>	
Adaptive to situations	Dominant (desire to influence others)
Alert to social environment	Energetic (high activity level)
Ambitious and achievement-oriented	Persistent
Assertive	Self-confident
Cooperative	Tolerant of stress
Decisive	Willingness to assume responsibility
Dependable	

Source: Stogdill, 1974

Leadership trait theory focuses on the leader’s values and beliefs, personality, need for achievement or acceptance, orientation to power, confidence, mental, physical and emotional attributes. Early leadership trait theory assumed that people were born with specific traits and that some traits aligned with strong leadership. There is a certain

degree of in-built personality or traits that could enhance one's leadership. People with the right traits would become the best leaders, for example, if a leader has a winsome disposition or charming charisma, it goes a long way in your leadership efforts, but if that's all a leader has, then the leadership lacks depth and sustainability. In other words, a leader may be blessed with a winsome personality or trait but he/she can never take the character quality for granted. It has to be developed.

However, McCall and Lombardo (1983) noted four important traits that would make leaders succeed and fail, they are, emotional stability and composure: calm, confident and predictable; admitting errors: owning up to mistakes; good interpersonal skills; and intellectual breadth (able to understand a wide range of perspective). Hence, there have been many different researches of leadership traits in the past. Somehow, inherited traits were being replaced by situational factors, which were considered as far more realistic and effective for leaders.

2.4.1 Leadership Effectiveness

The leadership scandals in companies, such as Lehman Brothers, WorldCom and Enron have prompted leadership scholars' attention to ethical challenges and leadership effectiveness (Stouten, Dijke, Mayer, Cremer and Euwema, 2013; McClaren, 2013; Owusu-Bempah, Addison and Sjahrul Ade, 2013). Owusu-Bempah et al. (2013) stated that researchers have started to realize the importance of followers in impacting leadership effectiveness and pointed out that research effort needed to be directed on followers-centric study. In addition, Rao (2013) opined that effective

leaders need to adopt soft leadership skill which demonstrates personal values, empathy, and persuasion and assertiveness behaviors. Rao further highlighted that soft leadership approach put greater emphasis on motivating and empowering the employees. Due to the notion that leadership effectiveness has great impact to the overall effectiveness of the organizations, leadership scholars had given due attention towards the effective dimension of leadership (Murphy and Ensher, 2008; Lewin and Ronald, 1938). Leadership scholars defined leadership effectiveness differently. Limsila and Ogunlana (2008) stated that leadership effectiveness demonstrates the leaders' efficacy in achieving organizational goals and objectives. However, Ensari and Murphy (2003) opined that leadership effectiveness would depend on leaders' charismatic behaviors. They recognized that these leaders have the ability to influence and inspire followers to perform more than what were expected of them. According to DuBrin (1998), effective leaders focused on group members' achievement of productivity and quality. On the other hand, Conger and Kanungo (1998c) pointed out that effective leaders promote positive attitudes and behaviors that inspire subordinates to achieve organizations' collective goals. No doubt the opinions and emphasis given on leadership effectiveness vary from these scholars, however, the important aspect of leadership roles remain the same, that is, to inspire, motivate and challenge subordinates to strive for better performance and achieve company objectives. Hence, leadership effectiveness is the successful exercise of personal influence of sales manager in implementing lead management in order to accomplish the desired goals of the organization.

Yaghoubipoor, Ong and Ahmed (2013) pointed out that leadership plays vital role in enhancing employees' job satisfaction and also have great influence on employees' motivation and commitment to the organization. Their findings have shown that different leadership styles have resulted in different job satisfaction of employees. House and Mitchell (1974) believed that leader effectiveness is a behavioral attitude that emerges in a particular situation. In addition, Blake and Mouton (1964) noted that effectiveness of leaders was only visible in their behaviors in certain given situation. Hence, it is obvious that leadership scholars differ in their opinion and set different criteria in determining the effectiveness of leadership. However, all scholars concurred and shared the same opinion that effective leadership would ultimately lead and inspire subordinate to achieve organization goals and objectives. These opinions confirmed that effective leadership is essential in motivating their employees to reach their maximum potential and realized the organizational desired goals in the long term. Furthermore, organizations should consider leadership approaches and use them to promote effective leadership on the complexities of leading people in striving for greater success.

Decoster, Camps and Stouten (2014) highlighted that should the leaders use negative approach, such as abusive style of supervision, employees' would then react negatively and in the long run affecting their performances and commitments to the organization. Gabler, Nagy and Hill (2014) described abusive supervision as behaviors related to unfriendly, intimidating, favoritism, nepotism, silent treatment, threatening words, public humiliation, fault findings and gossiping about subordinates. It is very common to have leaders demonstrating abusive behaviors in

frontline sales operation as they are leading a complex group of sales people. Furthermore, sales leaders are under tremendous stress and pressure to deliver the sales numbers. Therefore, in the process of monitoring sales performance, sales leaders would react aggressively, either intentionally or unintentionally, and demonstrating the abusive behaviors to push for the sales outcomes. Such abusive leadership approach is closely related to the authoritarian leadership style that asserts and demands absolute control and uncontestable compliance from the employees. Gabler et al. (2014) stated in their findings that by having abusive relationship between sales leaders and sales people, the organization would experience interpersonal tension resulting in negative job satisfaction and commitments to the organization. However, they pointed out that some large organizations have allowed such abusive approach to remain as there was indication of positive results, especially sales targets were met. Such scenario has made the organization to turn a blind eye towards the situation and even use such abusive leaders to handle certain difficult group of sales people in order to achieve the desired goals.

To be effective, leaders are required to perform different roles and align their behaviors and styles in order to effectively implement strategic plan of the organization (Marx, 2015). Hence, the top management of organization needs to assess the leadership capabilities in order to ensure success implementing of organization's strategy and achieving the desired goal set. An effective leader create vision, goals and strategy that inspires and motivates employees towards achieving organization desired goal (Marx, 2015; Nasri and Charfeddine 2012; Grant, 2012; Conant, 2012). Leaders play an important role in identifying and addressing

motivating factors that drive employees to perform better (Nasri and Charfeddine 2012). Effective leaders play vital role in strategy execution especially in mobilizing and motivating the team to pursue the desired goals (Yukl, 2010). Hence, it is important to align the employees to the strategy itself by keeping scores of the initiatives. In addition, should the employees switch off and are disengaged; any plans to execute a strategy will never get off the ground. The leaders need to understand the importance of their roles in strategy execution, especially in improving employee engagement and subsequently perform better in their tasks.

Alkharabsheh, Ahmad and Kharabsheh (2014) pointed out that leaders are required to demonstrate stability, reassurance, confidence and control behaviors when the organization is facing with crisis situations. They described crisis situations as severe time pressure under uncertainty environments. Alkharabsheh et al. (2014) opined that transformational leadership is recognized as most effective under crisis situations as they are able to respond well and create positive working environment. Furthermore, transformational leadership styles portray relationship-oriented approach between leaders and followers and provide followers with motivation to handle problems. It is the leadership that paves the way and creates the climate of an organization, and boosts the morale of staff and the degree of what the organization could achieve (Aris, and Mohd Fauzi, 2009). Leadership is regarded by many management theorists as a key ingredient in the success or failure of any organization. Effective leaders have been described as individuals who are capable of renewing the organizations which they lead, effectively communicating organizational goals and objectives. In order to respond to the challenges of the rapidly changing market environment, sales

leaders need to take actions that enhance sales organization effectiveness. Effective leaders, refers not only to capability and competence, but to ethics that transform organizations and people's performance. Effective leaders are responsible for influencing subordinates to stimulate change in attitudes and values, and amplify empowerment and self-efficacy of their subordinates.

To enhance their effective leadership characters, it is critical for the leaders to promote innovative and creativity in employees' approach in generating new ideas for issues relating to organization strategic direction (Zhang and Zhou, 2014; Loewenberger, Newton and Wick, 2014). Hence, it is their leadership behaviors that play the vital role of influencing employees' behaviors in demonstrating creativity in their day-to-day work. Yukl (2002) stated that subordinates' work behaviors are greatly influenced by their leaders. In general, leaders have a powerful source of influence on employees' work behaviors. Researchers such as Jung, (2001), Mumford and Gustafson, (1998) have identified that various leadership styles are the key factors in influencing the creativity behaviors and performance of the subordinates. Employees' creativity is closely related to innovative behavior of employees. Creativity can be seen as part of innovative behavior that is most evident in innovation process, where problems and performance gaps are identified. Hence creative ideas are generated in response to the perceived need of problems. However, creativity does not happen overnight, and it takes time for employees to cultivate the behaviors of generating innovative and new ideas that add value to the organization.

The emerging of more complex environment in this twenty first century, leadership role is becoming a crucial factor in driving organization to a new level of survival (Dumitriu, Timofti, Nechita and Dumitriu (2014). Leadership capability is the cornerstone of organization success (Ahmad, Kamoshida and Inohara, 2012). Dumitriu et al. (2014) further highlighted that leadership and leadership capability and styles were influenced by leaders' own personality, organization process cultures and employees' characteristics. Leader needs to give support, inspires, set direction and controls in order to drive the employees towards high performance (Dailey, 2012). Hence the demand for leadership development is of key importance in driving the organization to achieve higher performance through effective leadership. Though theorists have differing opinions on the essence of leadership, past studies have shown that leadership is the most important element that determines and impacts the vision and mission of an organization. For example, Grant (2012) has pointed out the inability of leaders to express and interpret the organization visions could impact on employees' motivation in striving for higher performance. In such case, leaders need to practice and utilize their existing intellectual abilities and experience in order to explore and become more creative in their leadership capabilities.

The term leadership means different things to different people. Leadership is not confined to only the Chairman or CEO of an organization, but it covers all levels of the company (Senge, 1996). Leadership is a process to create change and make things happen. Leaders are the central role of creating change process. Luthans (1988) in his study confirmed that being a successful leadership does not mean an effective leader. He further highlighted that successful leaders would be emphasizing on socializing,

while effective leaders would be putting effort in communicating the direction and vision to the employees. In actual fact, effective leader would drive employees towards achieving high performance with job satisfaction and full commitment to the organization. In the process of strengthening social exchange relationship between a leader and employees, it influences the performance and outcomes, such as employees' job satisfaction, enhance performance, employees' commitment and role clarity. High quality exchange relationships include providing employees with challenging goals, support in all situations and all task related resources. However, very little literatures are available with regards to the internal relationship between sales managers and sales people. Churchill, Neil, Steven, and Orville (1985) found that only 5 studies have been done on the understanding interactions between sales managers and sales people. As stated by Schein (1988) that organizational problems always relate to human interactions and processes. Schein (1988) further pointed out that the issue of trust arises when an action needs to be taken in a situation involving subordinates. When leaders say that they trust a subordinate, it means they believe that the subordinate can be relied upon and able to deliver the desired outcome. Generally, trust is required in periods of change in an organization as very often the subordinates would reject the change.

In leadership effectiveness, development of leadership Emotional Intelligence (EI) is one of the key factors in contribution to the overall organization performance. It strengthens team collaboration, relationship building, knowledge sharing, increase performance effectiveness and efficiency (Ghosh, Shuck and Petrosko, 2012). Goleman (1998) defined EI as the ability to handle manners so that they are

expressed effectively, enabling individual to work together smoothly against their general objectives. On the other hand, Mayer and Salovey (1997) defined Emotional Intelligence (EI) as the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotions; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth. The definition implies that EI is derived from an adaptive interaction between emotion and cognition with the ability to perceive, understand and also able to interpret people's emotion. Highly motivated Leaders are likely to have higher EI that would help in enhancing communication effectiveness (Jorfi and Jorfi, 2011). In their study, Lopez-Zafra, Garcia-Retamero, and Berrios Martos, (2012) concluded that Emotional Intelligence has great impact on transformational leadership style. They pointed out that femininity; emotional repairs and emotional clarity are important factors influencing transformational leadership. Emotional repair is the vital factor in its prediction of all dimensions of transformational leadership. On the other hand, emotional clarity is crucial in its prediction of charisma, inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation of leaders' behavior, whereas, femininity could contribute to leadership interpersonal relations (inspirational motivation and individualized consideration).

As a strategy, EI can enhance work behavior, human interaction, and leadership (Muyia and Kacirek, 2010; Aritzeta, Swailes, and Senior, 2007). EI theory was first conceptualized by Salovey and Mayer (1990). Subsequently Goleman (1995) promoted this theory in his book "Emotional Intelligence" and later on followed by other authors (Parker, Taylor and Bagby, 2001; Bar-On and Parker, 2000). Since

then, three new theoretical models emerged: the ability model, the trait model and the mixed model. The ability model emphasizes on how individual apply emotional information and also the capability required for such application (Brackett and Salovey, 2006; Mayer and Salovey, 1997). Highly motivated leaders with higher EI are effective and would be the driving factor in enhancing subordinates communication effectiveness and job satisfaction. Characteristics of highly motivated emotionally intelligent leaders are having strong desire to achieve, optimistic, and great organizational commitment. EI is the ability to think constructively and act responsibly in order to build up wise behavior and have high performance. Effective leaders need to have higher EI as they are constantly engaged in direct communication with employees and trying to influence them to change in order to achieve organizational strategic goals.

According to Appelbaum, Degbe, MacDonald and Nguyen-Quang (2015), in the initial stages of transformational change process, leaders need to overcome the resistance to change from employees. According to Smollan (2014), during the transformation change, organizations are required to focus on employees' emotional reactions. Smollan further argued that employees of lower level would react negatively as they have no part in making decision in the process change and thus resulted in having inferior feelings. There are great psychological challenges in leading a transformative change, especially in area of multiple dimensions of adaption, its complexity, social-emotional dynamics and new ways of doing things (Mirvis, de Jongh, Googins, Quinn, and van Velsor, 2010). It involves radical change in human behavior. The inner realm of a person and the interpersonal behavior and

style are two very important factors that have great impact on leader development (Kets de Vries, 2006). Interpersonal behavior is the expression of self which is influenced by the social experience (Wachtel, 2009). EI in actual fact is a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor self and others' emotions and to use the knowledge to guide one's thinking and actions. The inner realm refers to the feelings, thoughts, and emotion that shape the person's personality, temperament and drives to perform. Organizations can longer remain static in the highly competitive market environments. They need to fight for higher market share and improve revenues by challenging status quo. As such, organizations have started the transformational change process. Effectiveness and success are not only a matter of developing physical skills, knowledge and abilities, but rather emotions play a major part in human performance. What stops people from exercising their skills and knowledge is the failure of applying their self-management techniques where their emotions block and restrict their effectiveness.

However, trust is only meaningful when leaders are able to influence subordinates and employees to believe and follow their ways of implementing change (Liberali, Urban and Hauser, 2013). Scholars have defined trust as a person assumes the risk of depending on another person who they do not control (Gambetta, 1988; Barber, 1983; Knox and Kee, 1970). Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, (1995) further strengthened the definition by stating that trust is a dynamic process of relating competencies, ability, loyalty/benevolence and integrity of leadership to the employees. Hence, to achieve a breakthrough in sales performance, it requires sales people to develop not only their skills and ability, but rather also their emotional intelligence as customers'

requirements have dramatically shifted and demand for high trustworthy behaviors from them.

In this highly competitive business environment, the world is searching for effective and productive leadership with ethical and trustworthy behavior (Jaramillo, Mulki and Boles, 2013; Hassan, Mahsud, Yukl and Prussia, 2013; Fulmer and Gelfand, 2012). Trust has been termed as one of the main contributing factors in organization change and survival today (Fulmer and Gelfand, 2012). They further highlighted that positive expectations of trustworthiness (perceptions, beliefs and expectations), willingness to accept vulnerability (suspension of uncertainty and prepared to take risk) are the two main attributes of trust that could have great impact on the following three levels of trust: 1) providing sufficient information of company's overall strategic direction and strategy to the employees, 2) guiding and encourage employees to contribute and strive towards achieving company strategic goal, and 3) sharing and have open dialog with employees on their respective achievements (Fulmer and Gelfand (2012). Studies have shown that trust and confidence in leadership is considered as important factors in employee satisfaction in an organization. There are multi levels of Trust: individual, team and organizational. It has great impact on employee satisfaction, effort and performance, citizenship behavior, collaboration and teamwork, leadership effectiveness, human resource management perceptions and negotiation success.

Trust is the basic human behavior that allows employees to interact without fear. Trust in the work place can have great impact on job performance, organizational citizenship behavior, employee commitment and job satisfaction (Webber, Bishop and O'Neill, 2012; Fulmer and Gelfand, 2012). However, Webber et al., (2012) also emphasized that any violation of trust by the leaders can have negative impact on employees' behavior. In today's highly competitive environment, organization is searching for committed employees who are able to work under pressure and strive towards achieving organizational desired goals (Hawass, 2012). Faldetta and Paternostro (2011) pointed out that human beings are rational and selfish. Competency, integrity, consistency, loyalty and openness are key characteristics of leadership that can create great impact on employees trust in the organization. As highlighted earlier that leadership is a process in influencing subordinates to change and perform better, hence it is crucial for leaders to earn respect and trust from subordinates. To gain high respect and earn credibility, effective leaders need to be true to their words, have a proven track record and have a reputation of follow through and get things done.

With the growing concern and complex market environments, Salicru and Chelliah (2014) opined that there are urgent needs for organization to have leaders with high credible values and ethical behaviors to face the challenges solving the societal problems of corrupt practices, self-indulgent and unethical behaviors in the organization. Credible values are depended on the expertise of leaders, that is, how much the leaders know about the job. Therefore leaders are required to create and

provide conducive and happy working environments in order to motivate the practices of credible values within the organization. McClaren (2013) pointed out it is vital for leaders to create ethical climate in the organization so that the conducive working environments can positively influence employees' job satisfaction and performances. Such philosophy was confirmed by Parra, Nalda, and Perles, (2011) in their study with the comments that integrity of leaders is judged by their professional ethics of walk-the-talk. Chun (2005) opined that integrity is being recognized as crucial in ensuring leadership effectiveness. In addition, Chun (2005) used the term honesty, trustworthiness and integrity interchangeably. Hence, the leaders' behaviors must be consistently aligned with their words and actions in order to earn respect and trust from the subordinates. Leaders who engaged in behaviors that did not reflect strong value of integrity would not gain trust and support from people that they are connected with.

However, in the practical environment, leadership's ability should possess more than just knowing and choosing the right thing to do, but the skill of communicating effectively with subordinates (Goebel, Deeter-Schmelz and Kennedy, 2013). According to Rich (1997), to be a credible and effective leader, sales managers must proactively set good example and thus enhancing the sales people's trust in them. Trust is a two way interpersonal relationship between sales managers and sales people. The nature of their interpersonal relationship has great influence on sales people's overall performance (Dion and Banting, 2000). Similarly, Yammarino (1997) pointed out that sales managers' positive interaction can greatly influence

sales people's performance, morale and effectiveness. Furthermore, Argyris (1997) stated that leaders espouse about dealing effectively with others needed to align their intended actions with what they actually do. Building trust is no easy task. It requires leaders to be a good listener and respond proactively to the needs of the subordinates. Effective leaders need to be good at engaging with difficult personalities and situations, especially in sales.

Hosie, Willemyns and Sevastos (2012) stated that managerial performance and leadership productivity can be strengthened and improved with the well-being and job satisfaction level of employees being provided and taken care of by the organization. Hence, happiness in the organization workplace that drives happy-productive leaders and happy-performing managers is well recognized by researchers (Hosie et al. (2012). Past studies have shown that organizations can create and build up proactive working environments that will boost employee productivity and job satisfaction (Bruni 2010; Layard 2005; Argyle 2001). Johnston, Parasuraman, Charles, and William, (1990) stated that less satisfied sales people tend to reduce their commitment to the organization. Should organization want to have effective decision making group, they need to create proactive working environment culture within the organization.

Al Mazrouei and Pech (2015) opined that organizational culture has great impact on leadership as leaders need to consider the cultural factors before setting the direction for the organization. They further highlighted that effective leaders embark on

common values to develop positive working environments in the organization. Culture is attributed by the ways people work, think, feel and behave in the organization. It is a socially constructed concept of a collection of behaviors within the organization. According to Keung and Rockinson-Szapkiw (2013), leaders with high level of cultural knowledge are more effective in multicultural environments. In addition, Lee, Almanza, Jang and Nelson (2013) stated that leaders create organizational culture and develops a climate of close relationship with subordinates. Culture becomes an asset to the company and should work on and within its positive elements and strengths, instead of fighting against it (Katzenbach, Steffen and Kronley, 2012). As quoted by Katzenbach et al. (2012), companies like Four Seasons, Apple, Microsoft and Southwest Airlines see cultures as their competitive advantage. These companies capitalize on the culture's strengths by applying the following five principles for greater change and higher performance, namely, matching strategy and culture: do not imposed company's strategy against the practices and attitudes of its cultures; focusing on a few critical shifts in behavior: conduct dialog with employees and get constructive feedback to prioritize the required behavioral change; honoring the strength of existing culture: leverage on employees that support the strategy and desired culture; integrating formal and informal interventions: highlight new behaviors that would influence organization strategic direction and integrate both formal and informal interaction for the desired change; and measuring and monitor cultural revolution: close evaluation of the progress of change and focus on visible outcomes of changes, such as improving business performance, showing new actions/behaviors, achieving set target/schedules and change or improvement on employee's beliefs, feelings and mind-sets.

Katzenbach et al. (2012) pointed out that organization like Washington Mutual, Home Depot, and the U.S. Marine Corps were destroyed by their respective powerful culture during the Korean and Vietnam wars. O'Toole (1996) stated that culture is a system of beliefs and actions which would lead to behavioral change in the employees. Culture plays an important part in determining how employee behave and act in the organization (Hofstede, 1980). Hence, interaction between sales managers and sales people would be critical in optimizing organization sales growth as the daily encounters could influence the behaviors of the sales people through motivation and motivation process. Implementing change has faced resistance in many organizations.

2.4.2 Transactional Leadership

The Transactional and Transformational Leadership theories were first introduced by Burns (1978). Both transactional and transformational leadership styles are focusing on leadership behaviors that emphasized on the leaders-followers relationships building. As such these two leadership styles are termed as strategic leadership (Ozer and Tinaztepe (2014). Hambrick (2007) defined strategic leadership as leaders being concerned with the scope of strategic activities of employees. According to Ozer and Tinaztepe (2014), their study has found that transformation leadership, as compare to transactional leadership, has greater influence on organization outcomes. Burns (1978) conceptualized that transactional leadership occurred when mutual exchange (of economic, psychological or political gains) of relationships are created between leaders and followers. Transactional leadership emphasized on building trust in

leaders. This act is a joint effort towards a common goal, i.e. a bargain to aid the interests of each party. Burns' (1978) notion of leadership, being an instrumental exchange relationship was not new to leadership theory. Indeed, House (1971) has already set a foundation of path-goal theory which included four leadership behaviors, such as directive, supportive, participative and achievement oriented. These behaviors have great impact on subordinates' performance. Directive approach is effective under the situation where subordinates are unsure of their tasks. Whereas, supportive approach would be of great help when subordinates are working in a stressful and pressured working environment. On the other hand, participative approach helps and enhances subordinates' performance and achievement oriented leadership is vital in inspiring subordinates in achieving the overall organization goals.

Transactional leadership is also known as managerial leadership that focuses on the role supervising the organization performance. Traditionally, transactional leadership approaches are used in pushing for short term sales target (Charles and David, 2010; Bryman, 1992). Targets were set with rewards for achieving the desired goal. Being pressured to achieve targets and avoidance of penalties may push employees to indulge in unethical behavior such as lying and confusing the customers and thus tarnishing the confidence and trusts of clients (Jelinek and Ahearne 2006; Schweitzer, Lisa, and Bambi 2004). The transactional leader works through creating clear structures whereby employees are clear of what is expected from them and also the rewards that they get for achieving the desired goals. In transactional leadership, the

relationship between leaders and subordinates are considered as an exchange of giving something for something in return. Subordinates get rewarded when they performed and penalized when they failed to deliver.

Grove, Pickett, Jones, and Dorsch, (2012) viewed customer rage as a behavioral response that would force them to take negative actions. Moutongho Nzengue, N'goala and Kreziak (2012) concurred that customer's feeling of betrayal due to unethical practices could result in retaliation. Mc-Coll-Kennedy, Patterson, Smith, and Brady, (2009) stated rage as a strong negative and antisocial emotion, an intense anger that manifests itself in numerous ways, including verbal, physical, nonverbal, and displaced aggression. The unethical behaviors would ultimately impact employees' job satisfaction and thus affecting and career fulfillment in the long run (Kammeyer-Mueller, Simon, and Rich, 2012). Such unethical practices by the sales managers definitely have impacted the customer long term relationship and also the subordinates' overall satisfaction and commitment (Zheng, Wang and Li, 2011). Ethical leadership has great influence and impact on customer long term relationship and thus attaining high economic returns and competitive advantage to the organization. In addition, ethical sales behavior has great impact on customer trust and customer commitment to the organization. On the contrary, unethical practices would result in customer rage and unsatisfied customers.

As highlighted by Alrubaiee (2012), the competitive advantage of an organization no longer depends on marketing mix strategies, instead creating a long lasting

relationship with customers is another key factor to organization success. Alrubaiee and Alnazer (2010) have conceptualized that customer trusts, commitment, satisfactions, communication and relationship quality are the outcomes of relationship marketing. Morgan and Hunt (1994) had concurred that trust and commitment are vital factors in influencing customer relationship. Salespeople are expected to maintain high standard of integrity and avoid dishonest and unethical behaviors in order to build up strong and lasting relationship (Saxes and Weitz 1982). It is important for sales leaders to demonstrate high level of integrity so that they are able to engage and communicate with sales people effectively. Effective leaders incorporate the value of honesty into their behaviors of integrity. As such, the leaders would consistently present themselves in an authentic and truthful manner. Argyris (1997) pointed out that leaders should align their behaviors in what they would do and what they actually do. Hence, effective leaders should avoid the misalignment between what was said and what was done. This misalignment demonstrates the leaders' deceptive behaviors that could mislead others and thus loose respect from subordinates. When subordinate decide to respect you as a leader, they observe what you do so that they able to understand who you are. Subordinates use this observation to translate whether you are an honorable and trusted leader or a self-serving leader who abuses authority.

Unethical employees can have great impact on financial and social costs of organization (Mishina, Dykes, Block, and Pollock, 2010). Past research on unethical behavior has always been focusing on the causes made by negative motivations, workplace deviance, and non-compliant behavior (Robinson and Bennett, 1995;

Puffer, 1987). Nevertheless, Umphress, Bingham, and Mitchell (2010) argued that unethical behavior can have a positive impact to the organization. They have conceptualized the theory of Unethical Pro-organizational Behaviors (UPBs) that argue unethical behavior conducted can benefit organization. Past studies have also shown that unethical leaders are not addressing the unethical acts, instead encouraging and rewarding subordinates for such acts (Herchen, Cox, and Davis 2012). Meaning, employees who aligned closely with organization direction and have positive understanding were likely to practice in unethical pro-organization behaviors.

However, for decades, spiritual leaders, scholars and theorists have been emphasizing on the positive impact of ethical leaders. Sabir et al., (2012) stated that effective and high quality leaders need to possess ethical values and behaviors in order to be a role model for the subordinates. Ethical leadership features strongly on moral perception, moral judgment, moral management, moral impression, moral relationship, moral perception and unbiased dealing (Sabir et al., 2012; House and Dessler, 1974). These ethical values are vital attributes for organization success in the long run. Organizations need to provide learning environment for employees to acquire the ethical codes and conduct for them to excel in their performance. In addition, corporate ethical value is an important factor that will influence and strengthen ethical leadership and enhancing employee performance.

2.4.3 Transformational Leadership

Researchers and scholars have identified different types of leadership, namely transactional, transformational, situational, servant authentic leadership. These leadership styles have different features and characteristics (Jordan, Brown, Trevino and Finkelstein, 2011; Walumbwa, Avolio, Garner, Wernsing, and Peterson, 2008; Avolio and Gardner, 2005). Among these leadership types, transformational leadership appears to be a highly recognized approach in managing followers, and especially sales people (Dubinsky, Yammarino, Jolson & Spangler, 1995). The concept of transformational leadership theory was first introduced by Burns (1978) as leaders and followers make each other to advance to a higher level of moral and motivation. Bass (1985) expanded upon Burns (1978) original concept and concluded the definition based on the impact of followers as garner loyalty, trust, respect and admiration for the leaders. Bass (1985) described the characteristics of transformational leadership as intellectual stimulation where not only to challenge status quo, but employees are encouraged to be creative and seek for new ways of doing things; individualized consideration by having open communication process to allow individual employee to contribute and share ideas; inspirational motivation with great vision and set clear direction to lead and motivate subordinates to strive for greater performance; and idealized influence of a role model for subordinate to trust, respect and follow. Leaders play crucial roles in facilitating employees' career satisfaction and development processes and thus motivating them to perform better at the same time reducing the rate of turnover intention as employees have found satisfaction and meaningful in the job.

The creative contribution of employees is the results of empowering process of shifting responsibilities and authority from leaders to subordinates (Biemann, Kearney and Marggraf, 2015). Biemann et al. (2015) further viewed the shifting process as a psychological empowerment as the employees gained more discretion at work and able to release the inner creative potential. Salicru and Chelliah (2014) pointed out that leaders are required to demonstrate high levels of ethical values and empowering employees in order to perform well in the organization. According to Men and Stacks (2013), as compared to transactional leadership, employee empowerments are positively linked with transformational leadership as the leaders allow employees to get involved in the decision-making process. Hence, employees are satisfied with the approach and thus becoming more committed with the organization. In the long term perspective, the empowering process would strengthen leaders-employees relationship. Ultimately, employees put greater trust in the leaders. Bass (1990) noted that transformational leaders are recognized by followers as effective leaders as compared to transactional leaders who offer material rewards and the punishment. Bass (1985) emphasized that transformational leadership's main objective is to challenge and encourage employees' participation and in driving them to achieve organization goal. The process allows transformational leadership to build close relationship with subordinates. Thus, they have better understanding of job demands and able to match and control the staffs' maturity level to the situation. In addition, they are able to raise subordinates' needs to a higher level in the Maslow hierarchy. In the long term perspective, subordinates will be motivated to go for the collective needs, instead of their personal interest.

For that matter, transformational leadership has been recognized as the most effective in sustaining today's complex and competitive environment. Saeed, Almas, Anis-ul-Hag and Niazi (2014) stated in their findings that transformational leadership style has demonstrated and adopted a constructive approach in handling difficult environments and conflict situation in organization. In the day-to-day operation, different in opinions and having disputed issues among the employees are common scene in the organization. Therefore it is vital to have leaders that are capable and ready to resolve these conflicts and build team works among employees. Abeysekera and Wickramasinghe, (2012) agreed that transformational leadership can enhance selling effectiveness when salespersons are emotionally and intellectually influenced by the leader to work as a team in the sales organization. Hence, working for a transformational leader can be a wonderful and uplifting experience and employees would put passion and energy into everything they do. Chuang, Judge and Liaw, (2011) stated that transformational leadership has great influence on salespeople's moods and emotions and could enhance their selling effectiveness. They further argued that transformational leadership has greater influence than transactional leadership in salesperson performance as transformational leadership emphasize on motivational process which is pro social behaviors, and not focusing on just mere exchange of relationship by transactional leadership. Both transactional and transformational leadership were two ends of a spectrum of leadership styles as transactional leadership focuses on the short term economic exchange relationship, while transformational leadership engages in a longer social exchange of relationship in inspiring and building up of individual's potential.

In their study, Rhee and Sigler (2015) found that women were recognized as not effective as compared to the masculine men. However, they explained that one of the possible reasons of this result was based on the local cultural norm being practiced in the senior management level. In addition, they opined that another possible reason for this result was that there was a lack of role model for female leaders to guide these leaders (Fitzsimmons, Callan, and Paulsen, 2013). Rhee and Sigler (2015) further stated that women leaders possessed more nurturing style of leadership as compared to male leaders. Similarly, Rutherford, Marshall and Park (2014) opined that female sales people's relationship-focused nature can enhance the nurturing process of highly supportive environment within the organization. Hence, it is more likely that employees would have higher job satisfaction in such relational-focused working environments, especially in automotive industry as majority of sales people are from the lower level of education.

However, Wang, Chiang, Tsai, Lin and Chen (2013) pointed out that due to differing gender and leadership characteristics in business environment, unfavorable perceptions and prejudice opinions on female leaders have great impact on their performance. Hence, according to Wang et al, in order for female leaders to obtain favorable outcomes of subordinate and enhance their leadership effectiveness, the female leaders needed to adopt more decisive and assertive, instead of the feminine behaviors. Garcia-Retamero, Muller, and Lopez-Zafra, (2011) opined that women are having communal/feminine behaviors as compared to men that have masculine behavior. Communal/feminine behaviors refer to the sense of being able to share and showing concern with others and, also being more helpful and prepared to nurture the

subordinates (Hoyt, Simon and Reid, 2009). On the other hand, Hoyt et al. (2009) viewed that men were having masculine behaviors that reflected on the mastery and control characteristics of assertive, independent and decisive individual. In Western cultures, masculinity is linked to power, status, and dominance in the work place, especially in the senior management level.

On the contrary, through his study, Dr. Greenberg, President and CEO of Caliper found that women leaders are more assertive, persuasive, empathic, sociability and flexible as compared to men leaders. He further elaborated that women leaders possess a stronger interpersonal skills and high risk takers. According to Brandt and Laiho (2013), their study has shown that subordinates have indicated that female leaders have demonstrated more transformational leadership style as compared to male leaders. Literatures have shown that as compared to men, women leaders are known to be more of transformational style as their collaborative and participative behaviors helps to develop subordinates (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen, 2003; Lopez-Zafra and Del Olmo, 1999). In addition, Jolson, Dubinsky, Comer and Yammarino (1997) asserted that despite sales management being dominated by male for a long period, many females have started to make it and successfully operate as sales managers in the frontline operation. They further stated that these female sales managers have adopted different leadership styles when dealing with different sales people. By nature, female leaders are more caring and having greater patience in caring and nurturing the subordinates in delivering the results. Furthermore, their feminine natures allowed them to be more enabling and considerate in leading the

subordinates. Being persuasive, empathic and flexible in character, women are able to demonstrate supportive and considerate behaviors. With these behaviors, women are said to be having more advantage than men and could be more effective and outstanding as transformational leaders.

According to Saleem (2015), with their inspiring and motivating behaviors, transformational leaders are able influence changes in subordinate's psychological states of mind. The subordinates' motivation, morale and performances are impacted by the transformational leadership (Kim and Kim, 2014; Schmitz, Lee and Lilien, 2014; Nubold, Muck and Maier, 2013; Meihami, Varmaghani and Meihami 2013; Khatri and Duggal, 2011). Transformational leadership inspires the followers and intellectually stimulates and influences the employee to achieve the organization's long-term goals through effective communication, trust and self-knowledge of the leader (Schwepker and Good, 2010). The process involves setting directions, establishing a vision, developing people, coaching, organizing and building relationships. Transformational Leadership has been recognized as an effective strategy to lead change in this highly competitive environment (Fedor, Caldwell, and Herold, 2006; Ford, Weissbein, and Plamondon, 2003; Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002; Bass, 1990). Researchers such as MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Rich, (2001), Bass, (1997), Dubinsky et al. (1995) have focused greatly on transformational leadership study as they recognized that the characteristics of transformational leadership could enhance the effectiveness of selling. To mitigate the tensions and facilitate effective selling, managers must demonstrate appropriate transformational leadership

behaviours during this organizational change process as it allows the leadership to guide the employees through adaptations and inspire them to strive for the challenging goals ahead.

Providing sales force leadership is considered as vital in the sales organization (Ingram, LaForge and Leigh (2002)). Recent development in study of transformational leadership has been the evidence of the used of transformational leadership for improving organizational satisfaction, commitment, and effectiveness. Transformational leadership could impact on followers positively as pointed out by Dubinsky, Yammarino, Jolson and Spangler (1995). Pillai, Schriesheim and William (1999)'s study concluded that with the trust in leaders, transformational leadership approach have positive impact in organizational citizenship behavior. On the contrary, transactional leadership recorded a negative impact in leader-follower relationship. Their findings pointed out that high degree of trust in leaders could influence employees' engagement in organizational citizenship behaviors of non-job related matters. Transformational leadership acts as a Change antecedent, which facilitates the development of quality relationships between leaders and their employees. Positing relationship quality as an explicit employee reaction to such leadership as it would stimulate and support effective employee change behaviours in the form of organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB). Through high-quality relationships, leaders could demonstrate the change processes and creating change vision to promote positive employee change consequences. The high quality of relationships between leaders and employees paves the way for two parties to interact

on the basis of shared obligations, respect, and trust with one another. Hence they are able to engage effectively in communicative process of getting the job done.

Researchers started the discovery of transformational leadership with the description of neo-charismatic paradigm (Beyer, 1999; Hunt, 1999; Bryman, 1992) as the charisma attribute played a very important role in this new paradigm. The concept of neo-charismatic paradigm theory was initiated by Burns (1978) in their respective publication of *Theory of Charismatic Leadership and Leadership*. According to Hunt (1999), without these two seminal publications, this new paradigm would have a different shape of what it is today as it involved the concept of charismatic leadership. However, Beyer (1999) argued that this paradigm was in fact not that new as the study on leadership has changed and yet the research was still focusing on traits and behaviors of leaders of the last few decades. She then suggested that the phrase of new paradigm has been overused. Similarly, Yukl (1999) has challenged the compatibility of transformational and charismatic leadership theories by saying that they are distinct but overlapping and that the simultaneous occurrence of transformational and charismatic leadership is both uncommon and unstable. Yukl (1999) perceived transformational leadership theory as weak conceptualization as he viewed that the construct validity issues were not properly addressed and suggested that the underlying influence processes remain vague and need further research; and the theory focuses mainly at the dyadic level of the leader-subordinates rather than at the leader's influence on team processes. However, it was noted that some of the transformational attributes lacks construct validity and questioned whether supporting

is one of the core transformational leader behavior as individual consideration covers both supporting and developing behaviors. These theories claim that leadership behaviors have great impact and transformational effects on followers. However, none of these theories account for a motivational explanation for these effects.

Nevertheless, this new paradigm of neo-charismatic reflects a 'new' perspective of charisma attributes in transformational leadership theory (Bass, 1995). In the context of neo-charismatic leadership paradigm, it is known as the leader-follower relationship. And, on the sociological context, charisma is recognized as social structure of complex environment and human interaction that could not be easily separated (Beyer, 1999). Charismatic leadership study was not being explored and overlooked for nearly 60 years till House's conceptualization in 1976 (Conger and Kanungo, 1998b). This theory is considered as one of the most important models of charismatic leadership as it highlights on followers' emotional and motivational attributes. Charisma is the power to inspire devotion and enthusiasm. Charismatic leadership has the effects of emotional and motivational impact on followers. However, leadership is a combination of charisma and character. Charismatic leadership could be shallow indeed as it will not stand the test of time and loyalty. Hence a leader lacking charisma has a much better chance of succeeding as an authentic leader if there is a healthy and positive dose of good character.

Stumpf, Tymon Jr., Favorito and Smith (2013) stated both extrinsic rewards (monetary rewards) and intrinsic rewards (performing works with satisfaction) has

great impact on employees motivation and resulted in better employees work engagement, commitments and reduce turnover intension. However, the intrinsic rewards could impact employees' psychological feelings and enhance their sense of self-esteem and self-worth as employees are experiencing positive value when doing their works. Shamir, House, and Arthur, (1993) stated that human beings are motivated not only to maintain and enhanced their self-esteem and self-worth, but also to retain and improve self-consistency. As such, it creates follower's commitment and able to strive for goal achievements (Johanssan, Miller and Hamrin, 2014). Hence, leadership is considered as one of the most important factors in influencing employee attitudes and behaviors, especially transformational leaders build a strategic vision and create commitment toward the vision.

Based on Shamir, House and Arthur's (1993) framework, charismatic leaders apply the following steps to motivate their subordinates: 1) it increases the intrinsic valence of efforts, a symbolic and expressive of important values or identity; 2) it enhances followers self-esteem and self-worth so as to increase their effort-accomplishment expectancies; 3) it increases the intrinsic valence of goal accomplishment and linking these goals with the collective past and future and reinforcing subordinates self-concept and group identity; 4) it instills faith in a better future, emphasizing more distant, ideal goals and less of the short-term goals of traditional motivational theories; and 5) it creates personal commitment such that the vision and transcendent goal sustains followers commitment beyond a rational-pragmatic cost-benefit consideration. Whilst these motivational attributes might be similar to the traditional

expectancy theory, but then the emphasis is focusing on self-esteem, self-worth, identity and values that represents a great significant extensions of this theory. Furthermore, the emphasis on more distal, ideal goals and the emotional rather than rational-pragmatic outcomes contravene the usual outcomes of expectancy theory application, which suggest a concrete short-term goal accomplishments provide stronger motivation (McShane and von Glinow, 2000).

Shamir et al.'s (1993) findings have contributed greatly to the theory as it makes explicit the links between the content of the messages expected from neo-charismatic leaders and the motivational processes. In addition, Manning and Reece (2004) pointed out that intrinsic values, such as goal accomplishment, challenge and engagement, have longer term impact on sales force's attitudes and behavior than extrinsic motivators, such as rewards. They further highlighted that sales goals are effective in motivating salespeople and that sales managers can motivate sales force by providing positive challenges to them. However, Anderson and Huang (2006) argued that higher-level motivations are related to salespeople's desire for meaningful job responsibility and achievement of worthy outcomes. They suggested that salespeople should be challenged for a higher goal and be accountable to the responsibility so that they can obtain the high-level motivations. Sales managers need to maintain their respective professional ethics (morally and legally), portraying their personal values of reliability and trustworthiness, and being held responsible and accountable to their roles as leaders and managers of the branches.

Lu and Koehn (2015) use Chinese lexicon to describe the word responsibility with two words in Chinese: Ze and Ren. In ancient Chinese, Ze refers to debt which was associated with the charge and right to utilize the money borrowed from someone. On the other hand, ren means an appointment, or a position or a duty and trust in the Chinese context. Ren was closely associated with the charge of an appointment with positional authority or power to execute the job. It means that someone needs to take responsibility and being held to be blamed and punished for job undone. However, Li and Sun (2015) stated that under the Chinese culture of Confucianism, employees were not allowed to express disagreement with superior in public as this is a sign of disrespect for someone with authority. Leaders with formal and positional powers or authority are able to influence directly and indirectly on how the sales teams perform within the sales organization (Kraus, Ahearne, Lam, and Wieseke, 2012). The act of influence requires a greater understanding of interpersonal relations between superiors-subordinates (Rozuel and Ketola, 2012). The study of Rozuel and Ketola (2012) further suggested that responsible leaders and managers need to pay attention to their respective inner life, focusing on their ethical responsibility and also strengthening their relationships with subordinates. Lawrence, Mauws, Dyck and Kleysen (2005) have recognized that a wide variety of power can take place in organizations. Past studies on leadership power have demonstrated how a superior gain and lose their power and how different usage of power have contributed to leadership effectiveness and also the influence of behaviors on effective leadership (Covaleski, Dirsmith, Heian, and Samuel, 1998; Cannella, and Monroe 1997). Hence, leadership cannot take effect without the involvement of the subordinates and power is the key to leader's action. In other words, leaders must be able to employ power in

order to have influence over the behaviors of their subordinates. Responsible leadership has influenced over followers by applying and exerting power and authority in order to accomplish organizational goals.

As a consulting psychologist, Macaux (2012) viewed that a responsible leadership is greatly impacted by the inner being, and not his/her outward actions. It simply means that action taken is based on his/her personal capacity of understanding the reasons for deliberation and self-determination, and not based on its consequential outcomes. Therefore, the depth of personal experience in knowledge is vital in shaping the judgment made. To remain competitive, responsible leadership develops followers by imparting valuable knowledge and practices so as to strengthen organizational capabilities (Rapp, Bachrach, Panagopoulos and Ogilvie, 2014; Mejia, 2012). Leadership responsibility is a self-imposed leader who is accountable for developing the followers. Lauer mann and Karabenick (2011) described sense of responsibility of leaders as the internal obligation and commitment to produce results. According to Lauer mann and Karabenick (2013), a responsible teacher emphasizes on having close interaction with students in order to motivate them to excel in their academic studies. Likewise, in sales operation, responsible leaders are also focusing on having close engagement with subordinates in order to influence and motivate them to excel in sales performances.

Khany and Ghoreishi (2014) pointed out that transformational leadership has great impact in enhancing the level of responsibility of leaders. In addition, they suggested that to build high level of responsible leadership, organization needs to provide

sufficient training to develop them. In today's highly competitive environment and an era of sustainability, the drive of developing responsible leadership is getting more attention as compared to past decades (Macaux, 2012). Leadership becomes an important issue in maintaining organizational long term sustainability. Similarly, Eacott (2012) highlighted that over the last five decades there was a significant shift of importance in leadership role as organizations begin to link high performance with leadership capabilities. This is exactly what the researcher is looking at for this AR: to build a responsible team of HOB that will strive in achieving both the immediate and mid-term goal by year 2016 and beyond. Macaux (2012) emphasized that the development of leadership responsibility would depend very much on individual leader's personal value commitment of transformation in mindset, motivation and action.

In reality, the transformational leadership approaches of selecting appropriate leadership style to suit and apply in a particular situation can be aligned to the Situational Leadership theory as stated by Hersey and Blanchard (1982). Situational leadership theory is one of the types of leadership theory. This type of leadership model and style suggests that different leadership is suitable, applicable and adaptable for different situations. In other words, the best action to be taken by a leader depends on the situation the leader faced. As the situation changes, a leader should change the leadership style used. In addition, to adopt a particular leadership style also depends on the relationship between the subordinates and the leader. The relationship with the employees plays a vital role in determining the leadership style needed in the

organization so that employees can deliver their highest level of performance. Leaders' behaviors are often being influenced by mood and stress of job.

Lewin (1946) had identified three leadership styles, (1) Authoritarian leadership which is also known as autocratic leader that gives clear direction of what needs to be done, when should it be done and how it should be carried out; (2) Delegative (Laissez-Faire) Leadership which offers little or no guidance to subordinates to make decision and, (3) Democratic leadership or participative leadership that offers and encourages group of subordinates to participate and give input, but retain the final decision in the decision-making process. Authoritarian leaders make decision independently with no input from the subordinates. An autocratic leader dictates and commands the group (Harnackova, Halova and Nechanicka, 2015). This leadership style is suitable in situations with little time for group decision making. The leaders are assertive and decisive in leading and commanding the team in action. And, in addition, it is needful for a team of inexperienced and unskilled group of employees.

According to Ma and Tsui (2015), laissez-faire leadership is similar to Daoist leadership guidelines of selfless leaders which stated that to be effective, leaders have no personal agenda and merely pursuing whatever the subordinates want. In addition, these leaders are humble, sincere and prepared to listen to others. Past leadership scholars have concurred that Daoist leadership philosophy and laissez-faire leadership have avoided the responsibility of making critical decisions (Eagly et al., 2003; Bass, 1985). Without precise decision and leaders do nothing in the frontline

sales operation, the sales team will not be effective and thus performance being affected in the long run.

Lewin (1946) opined that democratic leadership is the most effective leadership style as compared to the other two, but it does have some downsides too, especially when unclear roles were set and time is limited in making decision. Democratic leadership style allows debates, acknowledges ideas, and motivates subordinates to contribute ideas before making final decision (Harnackova et al., 2015). However, it can be a setback for young and inexperienced employees as they might not be conversant and have sound knowledge to contribute to the decision made. According to Ghiselli and Wyatt (1972), their study on a group of Japanese managers has found that authoritative managers were more successful and effective than the democratic managers. They pointed out that authoritative approach is much faster than democratic approach in terms of decision making process as democratic approach allows team members to debate and argue over an issue before a conclusion is made. It is time consuming as compared to authoritative approach. Such contradictory findings could be real happenings in the organization, but a leader could apply both authoritative and democratic approach in any particular given situation. Meaning, leader could gather opinions and suggestions from the team, and yet be firm in making his final decision. An autocratic leader could be successful under tight timelines and dictates tasks to group members to focus on organization objectives. On the other hand, democratic leader is able to inspire, motivate and encourage ideas and input from all team members toward success. Employees feel engaged, being motivated and creative in the entire process.

Shekari, Yazd, and Nikooparvar, (2012) suggested that servant-leadership style is more ideal than those described by Lewin (1946): authoritarian leadership (autocratic) style, participative leadership (democratic) style and delegative leadership (Laissez-Faire) style. Servant-leadership style emphasizes on service to others with holistic approach, and joint decision making process (Shekari et al., 2012). Based on the recent review of Hunter, Neubert, Perry, Witt, Penney and Weinberger (2013), seven dimensions of servant leadership were identified: (1) forming relationships with subordinates by having valuable time with the subordinates; (2) empowering subordinates; (3) assisting subordinates to enhance their skills; (4) demonstrating ethical behavior with strong moral values; (5) demonstrating conceptual skills of balancing work and vision; (6) gives priority on subordinates' success and, (7) encouraging subordinates to participate in community service. Servant-leadership can influence and develop employees' inner potential especially in the areas of task effectiveness, positive commitment to the job, stewardship, self-motivation and leadership capabilities (Samad, and Mohd.Yusuf, 2012). Hunter et al.'s (2013) study found that servant leadership has great impact on sales success and enhance employees' commitment as employees were influenced and encouraged to interact more and able to help one another in the process. Servant-leadership would be more practical for leaders who choose to serve first, and then lead as a way of directing the team member. Servant-leadership encourages collaboration, trust, foresight, listening, and the ethical use of power and empowerment and thus increasing employee commitment.

Brown and May (2012)'s study further strengthened Bass (1998)'s report that transformational leadership skill can be developed and trained, thereafter strengthening organizational performance. In addition, Brown and May (2012) stated that top management full commitment and participation in developing the leadership are key factor in the making change process a success. Change in an organization is always a leadership issue. It takes a leader to create positive change. Therefore, top management need to be transparent and communicate with open and honest way to the leadership. Lassk et al., (2012) viewed that organization's salespeople training approach needs to change by focusing more on the employees' commitment, rather than just emphasizing on knowledge and skill alone. Organizations have spent millions and invested heavily in training and development programs that could build up the skill and competencies level of sales staff in order to increase productivity (Badrinarayanan, West and Zank, 2012). Badrinarayanan et al., (2012) further stated that recently organizations have greater and emphasis on sales coaching program for salespeople as compared to the last decade. Marsh (1992) pointed out that working relationships have great impact on the effectiveness of coaching. The interactions of subordinates were depended on the nature of their working relationships with the sales managers.

Coaching process encompasses leadership interactions with the followers (Sue-Chan, Wood and Latham, 2012). They further emphasized that coach should possess relevant skills and knowledge in order to help the followers. In addition, Sue-Chan et al. (2012) confirmed that coaching has positive impact on employees' performance. Lopez-Zafra et al., (2012) highlighted that leadership is an emotion-laden process

whereby a coach need to be able to manage his/her emotion in order to be effective in discharging his/her duties. Past studies have shown that leadership is the key factor in influencing employee attitudes and behaviors in achieving the organization goals. Coaching is popularly being used as a technique to develop sales people skills, facilitating learning and transforming human behaviors for higher performance (Berg and Karlsen, 2007). As pointed out by Wilson (2004), through leaders' coaching, subordinates would be inspired to change and thus being able to build up successful team in an organization. Coaching is recognized as one of the effective tools for change management in an organization as the purpose of coaching is to move people to change in order to achieve the desired goals (Bacon, 2003; Payne (2003).

Wales's (2003) concluded that coaching substantially enhance and strengthen the effectiveness of the links between self-development, leadership development and organizational effectiveness. Nyman and Thach (2002) stressed that coaching is one of the critical attributes of an effective leader as they are able to help subordinates to recognize their individual unique strengths and weaknesses, inspire them to set goals and conceptualized a plan to achieve them (Goleman, 2000).According to Harmon, Brown, Widing, and Hammond, (2002), sales people are able to perform better when sales managers effectively train and coach their sales team. In addition, Morris (2000) stated that coaching has great impact on organization success as it motivates and inspire employees to perform better in order to achieve their respective goals. Coaching is an important attribute to sales managers when implementing change within the sales force management as it helps to motivate sales people to perform better.

Studies have shown that transformational leadership training has helped organization in enhancing employee commitment and thus improving overall productivity (Lowe, Kroeck, and Sivasubramaniam, 1996). Burns (1978) was of the opinion that leadership could be termed as either transacting or transforming. He further commented that transformational approach is much more effective than transactional style.

2.5 Sales Management Control System

Su, Baird and Schoch (2015) highlighted that sales management control system imposed top-down behavior-control procedures and employees are held responsible for their own behaviors in discharging the sales activities, regardless of the outcomes. They further pointed out that there are formal procedures and rules on how the tasks are to be organized. Hared, Abdullah and Huque (2014) stated that the control process of the tasks included planning, budgeting, performance evaluation, and information flow and incentives packages. The behavior controls system could enhance employees' motivation and attitude in carrying out the sales activities. Wang et al., (2012) defined sales management control as organization's formal and informal management in influencing the behavior and activities of its sales people to achieve desired objectives. Whilst Ingram, LaForge and Leigh (2002) stated that transformational leadership was recognized as a critical factor in sales force control and organizational success. Anderson and Oliver (1987) and Cravens, Ingram, LaForge and Young (1993) have pointed out that sales management control systems were regarded as the principle mechanism in enhancing sales force performance. As

such the leaders play very important role in setting direction for the sales team by developing activities plan and making sure that the team execute and carry out as per plan. The success implementation of the activities would depend on how stringent and serious the leaders are, especially in the area of monitoring and controlling the implementation process of the planned activities.

Chirani and Matak (2012) stated that sales management is to manage personal selling activities of sales organization. Sales management's attributes include analysis, planning, organizing, coordinating, directing, monitoring and evaluating of sales activities. In their report, Chirani and Matak (2012) further highlighted that there are three levels of sales management, which include people management, opportunity management, and sales process management. People management is the managing of sales and support given to the sales force by recruiting, coaching, training and retention program. Opportunity management is focusing on individual sales opportunity. On the other hand, sales process management involves the set of activity with complete methodology for managing sales activities and also the tracking of all sales prospecting activities. Chirani and Matak (2012) noted that effective sales process management leads to long term successful sales achievements in the organization. As such, enhancing the understanding of sales management control initiatives could definitely create great impact on sales people's performance in the long run.

With the emergence of advance technologies, organization sales management control processes are enhanced (Jelinek, 2013; Kilbourne, 2012; Rodriguez, Peterson and Krishnan, 2012). Corona (2012) concurred that IT has great impact on business strategic alignments, e.g. Sales & Marketing, Finance, Change Management, Service Desk and Customer Relationship Management (CRM). Sales Force Automation (SFA) and CRM initiatives are important strategies for an organization to gain economic efficiency and competitive edge in today's competitive environments. SFA is a system and process of building sales people knowledge of enhancing relationship with customers through the sales prospecting activities (Boujena, Johnston, and Merunka, 2012). With the possibilities of technology, sales people are able to interact and build relationship with customers by providing solutions to their needs effectively and efficiently. Sales technology system allows management to analyze and managed detailed information with regards to needs of customers with ease. In addition, traditionally sales people have to juggle with many contacts and prospects in a single day and would lose many valuable hours while going through the list of activities. However, SFA system could enhance the process by allowing sales people to manage their interaction with potential customers from the initial stage of leads to subsequent stage of being prospects and customers.

Both the organization and sales people should benefit from the integration of technology in SFA system (Fadel, 2012). However, Fadel (2012) emphasized that the level of integration would be the vital factor in determining the benefits derived (Gholami, and Rahman, 2012). To gain full support of all sales people in using technology in sales processes, Weinstein and Mullins (2012) recommended that those

who are strong in computer usage should be included in the sales team to influence those who are weak in computer usage or computer illiterate. Weinstein and Mullins (2012) further stressed that it is important to have top management support and commitment in the implementation of SFA system. On the other hand, Brdese, Corbitt, Pittayachawan and Alsaggaf (2012) found that organizational culture have great influence on the integration of technology in the system. Brdese et al. (2012) further stressed that organizational culture could have great impact on the development and implementation of quality automation system.

With the emergence of information technology (IT), we are now operating in the arena of speed in providing up-to-date information. Han (2015), vice President of Application, Asean, Oracle Corporation pointed out that it is important for front-line sales people to be equipped with the latest IT tool, such as smart phone or tablet so that they can stay connected with the organization while they are on the move in doing sales activities outside the company. Moutot and Bascoul (2008) pointed out that organization should introduce SFA and encourage SA usage to improve the quality and quantity of sales call planning reports. However, Brynjolfsson (1993) stated that investments in IT might not guarantee the company's overall result in terms of productivity. There is no significant effects of SFA (by using Information Technology) use in sales activities in respect of sales performance (Avlonitis and Panagopoulos, 2005). Speier and Venkatesh (2002) also find no significant impact of sales productivity after implementing sales force automation in the first six months of introduction of the system. However, Boujena et al. (2012) pointed out that SFA usage should be customer centric in building relationship and not purely on sales

force productivity (Gholami, and Rahman, 2012). With the support of SFA, the quality of sales visits and sales force productivity will be strengthened and enhanced through efficient monitoring and control of sales activities. With SFA (sales force automation) implementation, sales people could at least be more effective in their follow-up activities. SFA can assist in influencing and enhancing customer relationship level through its information processes. Organizations recognize the changes brought about by technology and actively embracing it. That allows employees to execute their respective roles in a more meaningful and effective ways.

Leadership is closely related to management. Appelbaum, Degbe, MacDonald and Nguyen-Quang (2015) differentiated the roles and characteristics of leaders and managers as: Managers focus on the how and perform on the basis of authority and responsibilities so that they do the things right; whereas, leaders emphasize on getting the right things done by influencing the people to execute them. Zaleznik (1977) stated that leaders are inspiring visionaries, and managers are good planners who are concerned with processes. Both leaders and managers can be synonymous in nature, but a reciprocal relationship between leadership and management: an effective manager needs to have quality leadership skill, and an effective leader must possess high management skills. Bennis (1989) further expanded the different characteristics between managers and leaders, as follows (Figure 2.4):

Figure 2.5

Characteristics between Managers and Leaders

MANAGERS	LEADERS
Administer	Innovator
Ask how and when	Ask what and why
Focus on system and process	Focus on people
Do things right	Do the right things
Maintain	Develop
Rely on control	Inspire trust
Have short-term perspective	Have a longer-term perspective
Accept status-quo	Challenge the status-quo
Focus on bottom line	Have an eye on the horizon
Imitate	Originate
A classic good soldier	Own person
Copy	Original

Source: Bennis (1989)

The role of managers is to coordinate and organize resources so as to get things done. On the contrary, leaders' role is to influence people to follow the steps that have been laid down in order to execute a task. It simply means that managers' focus on tasks, but leaders are concerned with getting the tasks accomplished through the support of people. Differences in the mix of leadership and management can have great impact on the various management styles, such as participatory management, democratic management, collaborative management, authoritarian management and top-down management.

However, both managers and leaders could influence employees in achieving the organization goal. Leaders and managers are different on more aspects than they are similar. Zaleznik (1977) viewed that managers have reactive character and willing to work with people in solving problems, but with lesser emotional involvement. On the contrary, leaders are more emotionally inclined and strongly believe in own ideas and

opinions. Bennis and Nanus (1985) expressed and quoted that organizations need both managers that do the right thing and leaders that do the right thing right. Mintzberg (1998) suggested that leaders lead by emphasizing on commitments. He further contended that managers need to simultaneously act as both manager and leader. Kotter (1998) argued that organizations need both strong and effective leadership and competent management to handle the complexity of the roles in the organizations. However, leaders and managers are not necessarily different individual, but rather different roles and responsibilities. Management and leadership are roles that are not mutually exclusive, but also overlapping roles in nature. The leader's role is to impart vision and strategic mission of driving the organization's goal and objectives. On the other hand, management role is to get things done and doing things right. Management is focusing on efficiency with control mechanisms of the managerial functions.

In a highly competitive environment today, organizations are faced with challenges to seek for proactive behaviors in managerial functions that can motivate employees to perform proactively since organizational goals change frequently according to market environment (McLarty, Liguori and Muldoon, 2012; Flaherty, Lam, Lee, Mulki and Dixon, 2012). With the magnitude of revolution, managers are expected to put greater emphasis and be proactive towards the macro environmental changes in order to protect and maintain organization performance (Dailey, 2012; Flaherty et al., 2012). As such, there is an urgent need to for managers to utilize management knowledge to initiate strategic plans and activities to strengthen the organizations' competitive

position. Hence, the managers' management knowledge acquired from past experiences is considered as important resources and strategic assets for the organization. Managers are required to set strategic plan, organize, coordinate, control and evaluate the implementation outcome.

Scholars have debated and reviewed whether proactive behavior is weak or strong in personality behaviors (Fuller, Hester and Cox, 2010). Locke and Latham (2004) defined strong personality as someone that is less constrained by situations, and a weak personality as one that is highly influenced by situations. Bateman and Crant, (1993) have classified proactive personality as a strong personality due to the facts that individual can adapt to situations and respond to the challenges. On the contrary, Fuller et al. (2010) disagreed and stated that proactive personality is not a strong personality as it can moderated by job constructs. Thompson (2005) conceptualized that a strong personality, such as sales managers should be given a position that allows him to perform proactively. The second theoretical concept as stated by Thompson (2005) was that proactive personality is influenced by different individual traits and also situational environments. Proactive leaders need to formulate change through setting direction, aligning workforce, motivating, coaching and training the team and inspiring the people to strive towards achieving the goal set.

Zaleznik (1977) stated that managers and leaders are distinct. Kotter (1998) concurred with the opinion of difference in managers and leaders. Covey (1992) further strengthened the statement by indicating that management is different from

leadership as leadership is a high-powered, right brain activity. On the other hand, management is the analytical and, left-brain effect of self-governance. Very often senior management has a wrong perception and misunderstanding towards the role of sales managers for being expert in selling and a role model to the salespeople, instead of their potential managerial functions, especially those that were promoted or recruited as management trainees and without practical sales experiences. Organizations with strong management but weak leadership will hinder and could suppress creativity and innovation and more incline towards bureaucracy. On the other hand, organizations with strong leadership, but weak management will lead them to change just for the sake of change (Rowe, 2001).

Traditionally, organizations always paid very little attention on sales managers (Grossman, 2009); instead sales force has been the main focus in the day to day activities and programs. As pointed out by Blythe (2005), sales managers are responsible in cascading down company's plan to the sales force. In addition, Brown and Barker (2001) stated that sales managers are required to communicate effectively on company's desired goals to their subordinates. By doing so, they recognized that leaders and subordinates relationship could be improved and enhanced further. Avery (2001) shared the same opinion by stating that effective management is the result from the way a manager manages the relationship with every individual subordinate on a given task or goal. Sales managers could influence on daily personal selling (Anderson, Dubinsky and Mehta, 1999). Sales force effectiveness is therefore greatly influenced by the leadership of sales managers who play the roles of leading the team

by directing, motivating and coaching the sales force. Sales Managers are also involved in the planning process as it could create ownership of all decisions making in the sales team.

With such misconception of the role of sales management, it is very common that organizations are promoting or recruiting salespeople as their sales managers (Salz 2009). Investment on training to enhance Leadership capabilities has been recognized by researchers that it has great impact on organization performance (Rowold and Laukamp, 2009). Anderson, Mehta and Strong (1997) pointed out that 57 percent of respondents received no formal training since their appointments as sales managers. Only 25 percent of respondents received sales management training before being promoted to a much higher position. This research findings, infer that it is likely that organization rarely provides formal sales management training, but emphasize the 'on-the-job training' philosophy for all new promotions and recruitments of sales managers. Hence, many sales managers have inadequate competency skill to manage the sales team in the organizations. However, high training expenditures and substantial amounts of training hours are allocated to training salespeople and not sales managers (Lupton, Weiss and Peterson 1999; Dubinsky, 1981). Limited sales management training research has been conducted in personal selling and sales management literature. In the past four decades, little research on management training was conducted (Powers, DeCarlo and Gupte, 2010). Sales management training is an important factor in improving sales force productivity and thus achieving organizational goals as stated by Powers, et al (2010). Therefore, the

inadequacy of sales management training would surely hinder the effectiveness of sales force management in the long run.

It is a fact that we could not achieve good results without having good and effective execution. Similarly, by having a good strategy alone is no guarantee formula for success. Strategy is not just a slogan or a mission statement (Favaro, Hirsh and Rangan, 2012). Strategic management is the strategic alignment of organizational objectives, formulating strategic plans and allocating resources to execute the plan effectively and achieved its long term goals (Jorfi and Jorfi (2011). Strategy formulation and strategy execution are like architecture and construction of a house (Campbell, Datar, Kulp and Narayanan, 2006). Without good blueprints design, the house built would be ‘ugly’ and of sub-standard, may be dangerous and not fit for use. With beautiful blueprints, but badly built, the house might look good, but dangerous to stay. While both strategy formulation and execution have their respective challenges and difficulties, therefore there is a demand for capable and competent leaders.

The key element of organization success is employee performance. Employee performance is a vital factor and laid the foundation for the organizations to realize their objectives effectively. Nasri and Charfeddine (2012) stated that intrinsic motivation (self-fulfillment) and extrinsic (rewards) factors could drive employees to pursue for higher goals. Without effective employees, the organization is in danger of not achieving its overall goals and objectives (Osmani and Maliqi, 2012).

Organization performance is not the effort of one or two individuals, but a group effort of all employees in the organization. Osmani and Maliqi (2012) further described that performance is a process of applying employees' respective knowledge and skills in achieving the organization desired goals. However, the sales performance comprised of activities that sales people need to perform in order to achieve the desired outcomes. Therefore, sales managers are required to apply their knowledge in responding to the challenges of the rapidly changing business environment in order to improve on the sales organization performance. Furthermore, sales managers have direct management responsibility for the performance of a group of sales people, and not to certain individual alone.

Manning and Reece (2004) suggested that sales people's performance need to be evaluated regularly and obtain necessary feedback in order to facilitate appropriate remedial action. Hultink, Atuahene-Gima and Lebbink (2000) defined feedback as the degree of sales managers' input to sales people on their performances. They pointed out that sales people do better when feedbacks were given to them by the sales managers. They further highlighted that feedback serve as a reminder to sales people on the outcomes that are expected of them. Jaramillo, Mulki, and Marshall (2005) reiterated that valuable feedback can contribute toward enhancing sales people's commitment to the organization.

In addition, Shoemaker (1999) pointed out that valuable performance feedback is associated with sales people's role clarity and thus meaningful jobs satisfaction. Managers without proper understanding on their task responsibilities would not be

able to function strategically and lead the sales team in the right direction. As such, feedback on the function carried out would reflect whether the managers are fully aware of their respective roles in the job. On the other hand, Grant and Craven (1999) highlighted that sales managers need to regularly monitor and evaluate sales people's performances such as sales activities, behaviors and efforts. They further confirmed that the greater the extent of behavior-based sales management control, the greater the effectiveness of the sales organization. Grant and Cravens (1999) defined sales organization effectiveness as a summary of organization outcomes such as sales volume, market share and profitability and, the behavior-based of sales management control in relation to monitoring, directing, evaluating, and rewarding. Anderson and Oliver (1987) defined behavior-based control as the extent to which sales managers execute and discharge sales management activities, such as planning, monitoring, directing, evaluating activities and reward sales people. Behavior-based sales activities are crucial in the sales function as the action would drive sales team in striving for better sales outcome in the long run. Hence, managers are required to plan and execute the sales activities. Without giving proper direction, coordination and monitoring, sales team might not be able to perform effectively and efficiently.

To cope with the challenges in this highly competitive market environment, sales managers must realign their long term strategic goals with their sales management control system (Eldridge, Iwaarden, Wiele and Williams, 2013; Langevin and Mendoza, 2013; Spillecke and Brettel, 2013). However, Lee, Elbashir, Mahama and Sutton (2014) pointed out that the success implementation of sales management control system to monitor and measure performance would required top management

team support. Spillecke and Brettel (2013) pointed out that entrepreneurial orientation (EO) approach of identifying new selling approaches and business opportunities is considered to be an important lever to increase sales performances of organization. They described EO as the degree to which organizations seek out for new business opportunities. Sales management control system is an important tool to manage and monitor sales people's behaviors and attitudes in pursuing organizational goals. Spillecke and Brettel (2013) viewed that management control should cover output, capability and activity control. Output control refers to the evaluation of sales people's performance as compared to the goals set. Capability control provides relevant training to the sales people and strengthening their competency and selling skills. Activity control focuses on sales people's behavior in executing the sales activity plan. According to Eldridge et al., the management control of sales people's behaviors and attitudes is considered to be the basic diagnostic system in an organization. Furthermore, Grant and Cravens (1999) suggested that behavior-based sales people's performance is an important factor of organizational sales performance as it has great influence on sales people's outcome-based performance. This relationship is crucial as effective sales activities will lead to better outcomes in the long run (Baldauf et al., 2002; Grant and Cravens, 1999; Piercy, Cravens and Morgan, 1998). Sales managers influence the performance of sales people through many sales related activities within the sales management control process. Very often, the failures of sales people performance were due to poor and lack of sales management control as sales managers do not have systematic approaches to monitor, guide and control their performances.

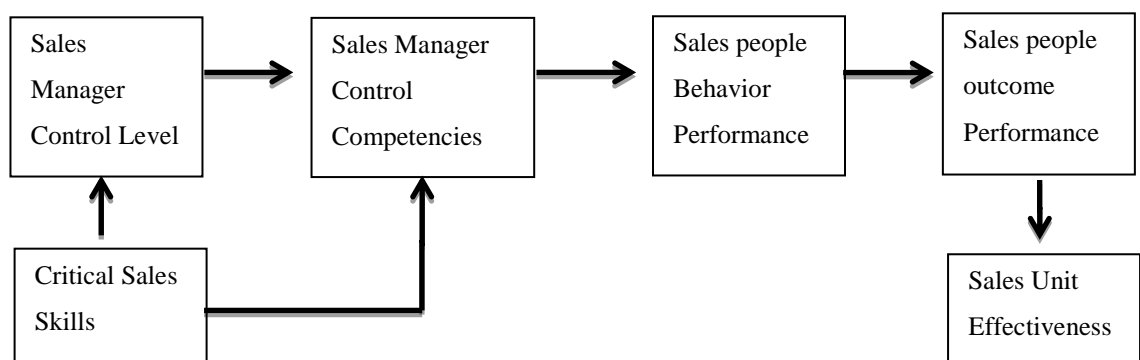
Baldauf, Cravens, and Piercy (2001) highlighted that the more the sales manager apply the behavior-based control strategy, the more effective is the sales operation. Harmon et al., (2002) suggested that to be more effective, sales managers are required to spend more time in the field monitoring sales people's behavior, especially executing the sales activities as the factors affecting their performance are complex, and not just observing their outcomes and results (Weitz, 1981). Based on Fayol's (1949) six basic function, control function is to verify whether everything occurs in conformity with the plan adopted. In addition, Taylor (1903) argued that control function involves a more focused form of management control over the employees and the process of work. These opinions and philosophy are crucial in the implementation of lead management as the sales managers are required to set a plan and at the same time ensuring that this process of work is being executed effectively.

Chonko, Dubinsky, Jones and Roberts, 2003) pointed out that organization are likely to miss learning opportunities if their evaluation is based on outcome-based performance. In addition, Baldauf et al., (2002) highlighted that outcome-based control is a short-term strategy as the behavior-based control strategy allows the sales managers to handle the complexity of sales function. However, Hultink and Atuahene-Gima (2000) argued that should organization put too much emphasis on behavior-based control, it will cause a perception of personal surveillance among sales people and misled sales people's discretion and thus resulting in a drop in sales performance. Instead, they suggested that outcome-based control strategy can empower sales people with discretion for their sales activities and responsibilities for their results. According to Baldauf and Cravens (2002), many research on sales force

outcome-based performance has either considered limited behavioral factors or omitted such behavioral factors totally. However, only few researchers (Baldauf and Cravens, 2002; Piercy, Cravens and Morgan, 1998; Atuahene-Gima and Micheal, 1998) have identified relationships between the behavior of sales people and their performance outcomes. Nevertheless, Oliver and Anderson (1995) suggested that a combination of both behavior-based and outcome-based control strategy is to be used to control sales people's behavior and outcomes. They further explained that management might believe that efforts and attitudes are the key factors of sales outcomes and the measurement of outcomes is important to calibrate proper levels of these inputs such as efforts and attitudes. While there are contradictory opinions among researchers, Baldauf and Cravens (2002) stated that through their studies in Australia and Austria, many sales managers had adopted either a behavior-based or an outcome-based approach to control, instead of the combination approach. Therefore, the core focus of this AR is using behavior-based control (Figure 2.5) model.

Figure 2.6

Sales Manager Control Mode



Source: Piercy, Cravens and Lane (2012)

Organization's goal and objectives should be the driving force for sales management control systems (Anderson and Onyemah, 2006). They further pointed out that to effectively manage sales force means that leaders are required to assist sales people to align their respective goals towards the company's. Sales manager's control competencies mean not just how much control is exercised by the manager, but rather how well it is being done. The sales manager control competencies cover both the skills and capabilities of the manager in executing the management activities. Sales managers' performances are greatly impacted not only by the level of control, but also by the skills and capabilities that they possessed in executing management control activities.

Past researchers' studies had confirmed that when sales managers' behavior-based control level is higher, then salesperson's performances are expected to be much more favorable (Oliver and Anderson, 1994; Cravens, Ingram, LaForge, and Young, 1993). In their seminal paper of sales force control systems, Anderson and Oliver (1987) highlighted that, compared to outcome-based control, behavioral-based control will have a more positive impact on salespeople's long-term sales performance as it emphasizes on enhancing salespeople's capability and positive job attitudes. Therefore, sales managers, as the heads of sales operation are required to be trained in order to possess higher control competencies so that they could manage effectively. In such highly competitive sales environment, sales people need the immediate superior's extensive focusing on activity control.

According to Collen (2012), managing means to supervise, guide, facilitate, enforce and consolidate collective learning for the benefit of the organization. Organizations do implement some kind of measuring processes to evaluate employee performance (Aguinis, Joo and Gottfredson, 2011). Aguinis et al. (2011) concluded that sales managers' decision making in performance evaluation would be greatly influenced by organization's strategic orientation. Scholars have shared the same opinion that performance management is one of the most important management functions in any organizations (Platts and Sobotka, 2010). It is imperative to develop and ensure both managers and leaders are equipped with competencies and skills in driving the employees towards achieving organization goals (Sheri-Lynne, Parbudyal, 2007). Performance is the main construct that help to achieve strategic goals of an organization (Mwita, 2000). However, performance monitoring and evaluation remain an annual affair in many organizations today (Knowledge@Wharton, 2005). Strategic goals and plans are often agreed upon, but then forgotten by all within the departments of organization. Plan assessment should be carried out at much more frequent intervals so as to monitor the performance of the employees. By shortening the performance monitoring cycle, from yearly or quarterly to monthly or weekly, management would then be able to get accurate feedback on the execution outcomes. Organizations implement management control processes to enhance managers control competencies. The purpose is not only to examine how much control sales managers exercise, but how well and efficient they are able to implement control in the sales team (Anderson and Oliver, 1987; Ouchi, 1979).

Neely, Gregory and Platts (1995) defined performance measurement as the process of quantifying the efficiency and effectiveness of action. Performance measurement has become a prime concept of organization control in driving the company towards achieving its strategic goals and striving for a higher performance. Performance Measurement System (PMS) is not only able to communicate goals and direction, creating strategic alignment, but to enhance employees' motivation and being self-motivated, gaining top management commitment, and challenging employees (both management and subordinate) being responsible and accountable for their action (Robson, 2005; Cavalluzzo and Ittner, 2004; Niven,2003; Kloot, 1999). It is an interactive process of communication, monitoring, providing guidance, and take actions to drive the employees towards achieving the strategic goals of the organization (Lawrie and Cobbold 2004).The organization used PMS to monitor progress by articulating and communicating its desired strategic goals. In the process of implementing its strategy, the employees on the other hand also have clear goals and know what need to be done. Thus, it is able to fulfill what gets measured gets done as measurements are milestones that help management to understand whether the organization is advancing towards its goal or not.

Researchers, such as Kober, Ng and Paul (2007), Widener (2007), Tuomela (2005), Marginson (2002), and Abernethy and Brownell (1999), have examined the process of PMS and its impact on organizational activities and outcomes. However, there is limited research that investigates the relationship between PMS and individual performance, except the paper by Moulang (2007) that examines the effect of interactive use of PMS on individual performance. Robson (2005) documented that

the psychological aspect of human behaviors are being influenced by the perception of control. More so, the sales people are required to maintain a balance between following the practices and procedures of the organizations. As such, sales people tend to perform and prioritize their activities in according to the organization's goals and objectives. Anderson and Oliver (1987) pointed out that leaders' order and instructions help the sales people in the control system.

This AR will take into consideration the outcome based and behavioral based perspectives on the controlling processes of the sales management in implementing lead management activities (Rajagopal, 2007). Outcome based process refers to the results of activities and behavioral based focuses on performance measurement and control processes of sales force lead management activities. Kennerley and Neely (2002) highlighted the key characteristics of balanced performance measurement processes as: well recorded decisions taken, able to measure and quantify individual's efficiency and effectiveness of actions, an integrated set of system for measuring performance, a clear mechanisms and strong supporting infrastructure to collect data, collation, analysis, and reporting and dissemination, a balanced perspective of organization's business performance, highlighting areas of concerned and a platform to plan and control. Lingle and Schiemann (1996) noted organizations using balanced performance measurement systems perform better than others.

2.6 Underpinning Theory

2.6.1 Leadership Theory

The world is changing. The pace of change is accelerating. Organization must change in order to achieve maximum level of organization performance and productivity in the workplace. Change begins with people – the way they see problems and apply creative solutions. It is of considerable importance to understand and promote effective leadership in coping and dealing successfully in such environment pressure. It involves a transformation of mindset and behaviors of the leaders. Leaders exercise leadership. Leadership is about influence all human activities and interactions with people.

As outlined under the research questions in Chapter One, the focal point of this study is the effectiveness of leadership in implementing lead management. Hence, the underpinning theory for this research would be based on Stogdill's (1950) leadership theory. From a scholar's perspective, Stogdill defined effective leadership as the process of directing and influencing the task related activities of group members towards achieving the goal set. These definitions have clearly indicated that leaders' direct participation in influencing the process of change so that the organization's goals can be achieved. This study views leadership as a holistic theory for inspiring and motivating human potential through the leadership dynamic.

However, this AR would primarily focused on Bass' (1985) adopted theory of transformational leadership which was an extension of Burns' (1978) concept as it has great impact on the leadership effectiveness in planning and implementing lead management of the sales operation for three reasons:

Firstly, this study will examine the leadership influences on the processes and the quality of implementing lead management activities, and not the direct impact of the actual outcomes, such as sales volume. These processes and the quality could be more effectively influenced by transformational leadership, which focuses on the motivation process of stimulating individual to challenge the status quo and seek for new ways of doing things (Chuang et al. 2011). Furthermore, transformational leadership is strongly related to interactive behaviors such as helping the subordinates and enhancing sales people performances in selling activities (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Rich 2001). In addition, transformational leadership behaviors are having direct influence on individual and able to inspire and stimulate employees to transform their needs and expectations to a higher level. Furthermore, transformational leadership not only inspires and motivates subordinates to accept challenging goals, but also to ensure achievement of the goals. At the same time the leaders also pay special attention and emphasize on subordinates' well-being and need for fulfillment. In addition, the leaders are able to overcome challenges to instill self-esteem and personal belief of subordinates.

Similarly, the behavioral models of leadership that transformational leaders possessed have high sensitivity to the followers' desires, able to articulate a clear vision for the organization, and inspire followers to follow their attitudes and behaviors (Conger and Kanungo, 1998c). Being able to articulate a vision means that leader knows where his targets are and able to identify and capitalize on opportunities for the organization. Furthermore, with promising vision, both leader and subordinates have

a clear understanding of the team's challenging tasks ahead. In addition, transformational leaders are having profound influence on followers' attitudes and behaviors by setting an example for subordinates and motivating, building trust in leaders and inspiring for a collective vision for the organization. Bass (1998) stated that transformational leaders are the role models for their subordinates and thus could gain confidence and trust from them.

Furthermore, these models assume leadership as a process that move away from the current status quo by influencing employees to change from the existing state towards a new state. By definition, a leader of change would convince their followers to stop doing things the old ways or remain status quo. However, leading change is an uphill task as human being prefers to remain where they are and happy with what they are doing. Human nature always resists change due to many factors and reasons, which range from fear of unknown (the future after change takes place), self-interest (what's in it for me), and fallacy of the exception (change might be good for others, but not for me) and etc. (O'Toole, 1995). The current leadership approach needs to be changed so as to effectively plan and influence the behavior of sales force in implementing lead management or personal selling activities within the sales operation (Hofstede, 1980).

Transformational leadership focus on people's emotion and values. Bhandarker and Rai (2015) has found in their study that transformational leadership style has great influence in the creation of positive climate within the organization and thus resulted

in having high level of positive emotions from the employees. As a result, the positive climate helped to mobilize employees to strive for higher performance. Thus, transformational leadership styles could contribute to the effectiveness of lead management plans as carried out by the subordinates (Conger and Kanungo, 1998c; Shamir et al., 1993). Similarly, transformational leadership impact leaders' behavior to influence subordinates (Bass, 1996, 1985). Furthermore, Yukl (1999) stated that transformational leadership is focusing on behaviors that are able to inspire, develop, support, and empower subordinates in executing their respective tasks. It is a process of motivating subordinates to carry out their tasks in a strategic way. Furthermore, transformational leaders could influence the subordinates to think critically by using novel approaches in decision making process. In such process, subordinates would feel their importance and belongs to the organization, which in turn, results more commitments from employees.

As stated by Conger and Kanungo (1998a), transformational leaders motivate and influence their subordinates to increase productivity. In addition, Bass (1996) pointed out that transformational leaders are capable of understanding subordinates' emotions and provide them with emotional support (intellectual stimulation and individual consideration). Burns (1978) has suggested that transformational leaders could help to strengthen the subordinates' awareness and importance of organizational goals, and also move followers to see beyond their own self-interests towards the benefits of the local operation. Transformational leaders are perceived as having intellectually stimulating characters by their subordinates. Transformational leaders are vital in

sales operation as they can intellectually influence and stimulate their subordinates to think above and beyond their present circumstances. In other words, transformational leaders do encourage subordinates to go beyond their comfort zone and prepared for change and evolution towards progress (Bass and Avolio 1990). Their leadership behaviors involve setting of goals, expecting subordinates to perform at their highest levels and conveying a high degree of confidence in the sales team. They are expected to guide, plan and monitor the performance of the sales force. Furthermore, their transformational leadership roles could set the pace for them to personally getting involved in the sales activities and considering the opinions and suggestions of the team.

Transformational leaders are recognized to be effective in motivating subordinates' confidence and also able to create an atmosphere for critically questioning the beliefs, ethical values and goals of oneself so as to achieve the desired objectives of the operation Dartey-Baah (2015). Effectively, transformational leaders are valued for their skills, values, abilities and intellectual assets that they possessed as they are able to inspire employees to look beyond their personal interests. As such, they could pay greater attention to each employee's need for achievement and growth by acting as coach and mentor. Subordinates are thus being given the opportunity to be developed for greater achievement.

Transformational leadership being more complex, but is more effective as they are able to recognize and exploits the subordinates' needs, especially the management

skills of sales managers (Chirani and Matak, 2012). Whilst sales managers are leading a diverse group of sales people with different education background, age, gender, culture and experiences, they need to possess the transforming leadership so as to shape, alter and elevate the needs, wants, values of sales people through their key leadership roles. Furthermore, transformational leaders always seek for potential motives in subordinates and trying to gain full commitment from followers. Highly committed employees could extend their work efforts beyond job requirements and able to increase customer satisfaction.

Secondly, effective managers/leaders matter to an organization. They are required to translate strategy into action and motivate the subordinates to strive for the desired objectives. Conger and Kanungo, (1998c) and Shamir et al. (1993) believed that transformational leadership appeal to group members' motives, aspirations, and preferences and able to inspire group members' focus of self-interest be shifted to collective interest. As such leaders' behaviors are to aim at encouraging employees to cooperate with the team members in order to achieve a common goal. However, very often leaders are ineffective in executing as they lack in skills and having troubled understanding and motivating their people. The leadership theory is focusing on leaders' behaviors, which are the most prominent factors to the understanding of motivational effects leadership.

Due to the natural tendency of human behavior with regards to work, employee needs to be motivated in order to perform better (Strivastava and Barmola, 2011). Leaders

constantly need to apply motivational strategies and tactics to encourage employees to enhance their job commitments and improve their productivity level. The motivational factors are playing the key role in organization success. Leaders may promote group cooperation as they motivate the followers to pursue organization objectives. Hence the sales force would be encouraged to give their suggestions and ideas in setting the plan for lead management. The leadership behavior entails in showing concern for the sales force's well being and needs doing small things to make the work more pleasant and being friendly and approachable to all.

Strivastava and Barmola (2011)'s study pointed out that employees need to accept responsibility of expected outcomes of their assigned job so that they are able to give full commitment and push for better performance. Transformational leaders are perceived as inspirational figures by their subordinates. Manifested in perceptions of leaders' attitudes and behaviors, idealized influence could produce admiration, respect, trust and commitments from subordinates. In addition, such motivational behaviors can influence subordinates to assume some level of risk-sharing and personal compromise so that the organization's desired goals could be achieved.

In the workplace, emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in influencing employees to be more efficient and productive (Joseph, Newman and MacCann, 2010; Zeidner, Matthews and Roberts, 2009). Antonakis, Ashkanasy and Dasborough, (2009) stated that leaders who can manage their personal emotions are considered as more effective than those who do not. They therefore concluded by saying that to be an effective leaders, their ability to monitor and manage their respective emotions (Palmer, Walls,

Burgess and Stough, 2001) would be an important factor to consider. Hence, to be effective, leaders should provide special attention to each of their subordinates in supporting their emotional needs and aspirations. That could result in having employees being inspired and demonstrate high level of commitment to the organization.

Hence, leaders with transformational leadership would be able to strengthen and enhance employees' job satisfaction and employees' better performance (Chang and Lee, 2007). Bass and Avolio (1990) have contended that leaders are regarded as inspiring figures, and able to inspire their followers to believe that they are capable of overcoming challenges, and threats within their job scope. Such leaders demonstrate a concern for citing and achieving the organization desired objectives. Thus, transformational leaders are able to earn high respect, trust, confidence and commitment from their subordinates (Bass and Avolio, 1990). As described and stated by Bass (1985) organizations do need for leadership that could produce quantum leaps in sales performance. Organizations need to have great leaders who can push for high performance, and thus they need transformational leaders that could get employee engagement and commitment and gain trust from employees. Transformational leaders will push organization forward and gain incremental performance, instead of merely a sustainable performance.

Thirdly, why do people join the sales force? There are various reasons, such as money, satisfaction, and fulfilling their potential. In addition, sales people do need a

reason to belong a feeling of accomplishment and the satisfaction of seeing their needs attended to. Such attention and accomplishments helps salespeople feel connected to the organization. In developing salespeople, the sales managers are required to focus to the needs of SA and hence creating a highly efficient sales force, and ultimately a more productive and innovative sales team. Shamir et al. (1993)'s suggestion that leaders need to communicate messages in respect of languages and symbols that address attributes, such as more references to values, moral justifications, collective identity, ideal goal and history, more positive references to subordinates worth and efficacy as individuals and as a group and, more expressions of high expectations from subordinates.

The above findings put great emphasis on self-esteem, self-worth, identity and values of the followers. Furthermore, the emphasis on more distal, ideal goals and the emotional outcomes would be the key factors in motivating the sales people who are traditionally facing with high level of job stress (Milbourn (2012)). The ever demanding role of performing well in the sales operation has put great pressure and job stress on sales people (Goad and VanMeter, 2012). The sales pressure of achieving high targets and interpersonal conflict between sales managers and SA have great impact on their job stress and resulted in emotional exhaustion, job attitudes and behaviors.

However, as highlighted earlier, 'change' is hard! The world is changing fast, and as such, organization and its employees must change quickly in order to survive in this

highly competitive environment. In reality, it takes long time and years to change people's behavior, way of thinking and pattern of doing things. The nature of leadership, either transformational or transactional, it serves to determine how effectively they can lead their followers. To achieve a greater success in the sales operation, there is an urgent need to build up a confident and effective branch leadership as they are the key leverage point for sustaining the change initiatives implemented. In addition, sales managers need to quickly earn trust from their sales force to inspire team spirit and collaboration between them so that lead management or personal selling activities can be implemented effectively. Furthermore, they need to be proactive in addressing the needs of the team (of SA). At all times, they are required to go out of their way to be creative and find new ways to motivate every sales people. They are constantly aware of the sales force moods, mindset, attitudes and commitment levels. Sales managers must have strong pulse on business and stay active. Sales managers hold leadership roles by nature of the position within the sales operation hierarchies.

As pointed out by Schwegker and Good (2010) that Bass's (1985) and Burns' (1978) conceptualization theory of transformation leadership could help organization in building and creating high employees' value and commitment, driving for a greater goals, and being inspired and motivated in pursuing better performance. At such, employees or subordinates' behaviors and aspiration values need to be transformed! Whilst transformational leaders are always interested with the needs, wants and desired goals of their subordinates, they are received and recognized as individually

considerate persons by their subordinates. Furthermore, they generally able to provide special attention to each of their subordinates in supporting their personal welfare, developing their individual needs, and aspirations. That could result in having employees being inspired and demonstrate high level of commitment to the organization.

Hence, in these highly complex and competitive market environments, organizations would need transformational leaders that could enhance employees' awareness of the importance of the expected outcomes and inspire them to look beyond their personal interests and go for the organization interests instead (Martin and Bush, 2006). Transformational leaders could also pave the way for employees to understand and appreciate their respective roles in discharging the jobs assigned to them (Dubinsky et al., 1995). Similarly, the charismatic and inspirational characteristics of transformational leaders play vital role in increasing employees' commitment in performing their works effectively and efficiently (Shamir et al., 1993). Effective leaders inspire and influence subordinates to perform and excel in their performance (Guay, 2013). According to Guay (2013), to be effective, leaders need to be strong in pushing subordinates to perform and excel in their performance so that positive working culture can be established in the organization. Strong leadership is the cornerstone for success (Avolio, 2004). In today's ever changing world, organizations are on the lookout for new leadership for their business single competitive advantage (Petrick, Scherer, Brodzinski, Quinn, and Ainina, 1999). Transformational leadership theory implies development and focuses on the follower outcomes, but do not go into

details of how leaders could develop the followers, nor do they enumerate the specific actions they take and the results of those action. Therefore, it is vital to supplement this theory with an effective developmental leadership theory that will explain the key traits and behaviors of an effective leader. Whereas, charismatic theory is looking at the perceived leaders behavior who are able to motivate and inspire the followers in achieving organization objectives. This process allows transformational leadership to build close relationship with subordinates as “leaders and followers make each other to advance to a higher level of moral and motivation”.

Different researchers viewed that leaderships are either born or being developed. Arvey, Zhang, Avolio, and Krueger (2007) and Arvey, Rotundo, Johnson, Zhang, and McGue (2006) concluded that 30% of leadership was hereditary and 70% was developed and trained. They further pointed out that development and training takes place on the daily job. Hence, sales managers while performing their daily lead management activities are able to explore new ways of doing things and demonstrate their leadership capabilities of inspiring and motivating subordinates and push for a higher performance. However, Pitcher (1994) has pointed out through her 8 years study that a balanced leader exhibiting all the ideal traits of leaders is extremely rare in nature. And, she could not identify any in her study. Therefore, it is important for this AR to consider carefully the approach taken in determining the right leadership for this study

2.6.2 Management Theory

Another underpinning theory considered for this research is based on Fayol's (1949) management theory that outlined the 6 basic functions and 14 principles of managers. He highlighted that the most important of the means which managers must use to ensure success is planning. It is critical to set direction and make plans for the organization. He further argued that issue of management control is important in order to monitor and manage employees' performance. A fundamental issue surrounding the survival of organisations is performance. This issue has important implications for the need to control organisational members, especially those in the sales operation and their activities in a manner that furthers organisational goals. Management control system (MCS) can influence sales people behaviours, which then facilitates the achievement of organizational goals (Hall, 2008). Furthermore, the psychological concept of human behaviour being affected by the perception of control is also well documented (Robson, 2005).

The function of MCS is principally about supporting and securing the achievement of organisational objectives. MCS provide managers with a mechanism to cope with the increasing information needs and a monitoring tool to overcome the limitations of informal management styles that require constant personal attention. In effect, MCS act as a performance-monitoring tool that facilitates growth. However, researchers (Narayanan and Davila, 1998) argued that the need for MCS arises for two main reasons, namely the need for monitoring and supervision of sales people performance, and the need for information-processing, which are the main roles of

MCS. The need to handle the increased complexity of information processing requires appropriate MCS to be in place so that sales managers are able to have access to timely information for decision-making, planning, control and evaluation purposes (Davila and Foster, 2007). MCS are used as formal control and feedback systems to monitor organisational outcomes and correct deviations from preset standards of performance (Henri, 2006b)

Management tools are required to motivate managers towards attaining top management objectives. Hence, the diagnostic use of MCS, which is designed for the purpose of assuring that organisational goals are achieved in accordance with plans by focusing on detecting discrepancies in the implementation process (Simons, 1990). The interactive use of MCS is a tool that can be used by middle management to monitor the performances of sales people (Simons, 1991). In effect, interactive use of MCS represents a way of organising attention towards issues of strategic importance and is thus a powerful tool that can be used in leading the competitive evolution of organisations (Simons, 1991).

Anderson and Oliver's (1987) concept of sales management control strategy emphasized on the effective management control of sales activities. As pointed out by Panagopoulos and Dimitriadis (2009) that Anderson and Oliver's (1987) sales management control philosophy is widely recognized by sales management researchers. Management control is sales manager's initiatives to direct and influence

sales force for the purpose of achieving an organization's sales targets. Sales force control is recognized as an important managerial process of ensuring sales force are properly guided and monitored for the sales prospecting activities. In principle, sales force control systems are managerial procedures that could influence sales people behavior and enhance their performance. In this respect, sales managers' behavior-based control would be focusing mainly on the planning, monitoring, directing and evaluating sales people's performance. Researchers such as Cravens et al., (1993) and Oliver and Anderson (1994, 1995) have found that behavior-based controls have higher sales people's commitment and performance than outcome-based control in the sales unit.

As pointed out by Piercy, Cravens and Lane (2012), sales management control can have great impact on sales people performance and sales organization effectiveness. They further highlighted that sales management control includes both behavior-based control and outcome-based control of salespeople (Dalrymple and Cron, 1998). Similarly, Grant and Cravens (1999) indicated adaptive selling, sales presentations, teamwork and technical knowledge as behavioral based factors, and customer retention rates, new customer accounts, market share and sales volumes as outcome-based factors.

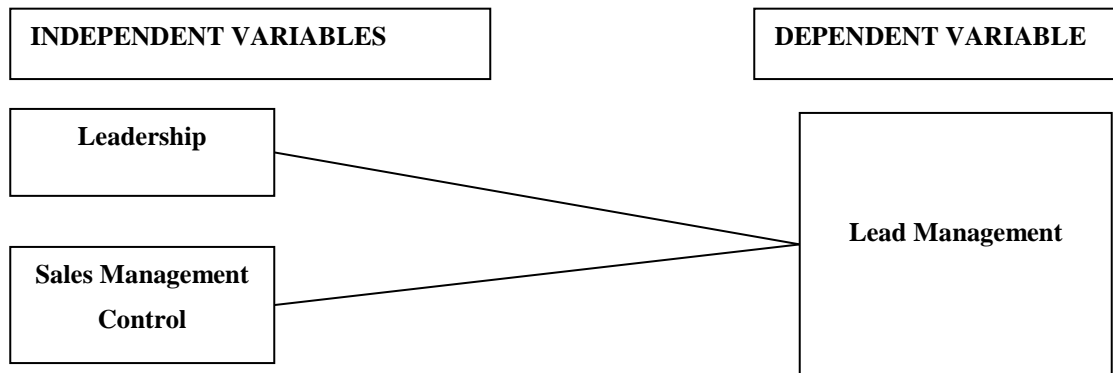
2.7 Action Research Framework

The above extensive literatures review helps to set direction for the development of the conceptual research framework of this study (Figure 2.6). Specifically, the model

will examine how individual leader behavior can have influence, impact and affect the effectiveness of lead management implementation within the branch operation. It also considers how sales managers can enact particular leadership and management control behaviors to capitalize on the effective implementation of lead management in the sales operation.

Figure 2.6

The Action Research Framework



As reflected in the underpinning theory in this chapter, the focal point of this study is the effectiveness of leadership in implementing lead management, this model suggests that applying a proper approach of leadership styles and within the context of using the right management control tools can enhance the lead management implementation. As evident in the literatures review, leaders were recognized as a critical factor in sales force and organizational success (Anderson and Oliver, 1987). Spisak, O'Brien, Nicholson and Van Vugt (2015) highlighted that leadership plays an important role in ensuring organizational competitiveness and success and leadership has been considered as the main factor for delivering high performance in an organization. At its core, leadership is about relationships between leaders and

followers (Notgrass, 2014). Hence, it is of great importance to understand the behaviors and characters of leaders and the significant roles of followers within the leadership process of implementing change.

According to Osborn, Hunt, and Jauch, (2002), leadership has both direct and indirect influence in making changes in the current system and processes. In leading the subordinates, leaders are required to direct and influence employees for the purpose of achieving company's objectives. Furthermore, leaders in an organization are required to carry out sales management control initiatives which include directing and influencing the activities of employees in striving for higher performance. Further, leadership tasks at the top of an organization differ from those at lower levels because the nature of work changes. Leaders at the lower levels are responsible for getting things done, such as the sales activities and are more of action-oriented. On the other hand, high level leaders are those that make strategic direction and decision for the organization.

This study would focus on the effect of transformational leadership styles on strategic change in implementing lead management. By incorporating leadership styles into this AR will significantly strengthen our understanding of the subject of lead management process in sales operation as charismatic leadership is able to change strategy and ways of executing the plan (Hutzschenreuter, Kleindienst and Greger (2012). Researchers (Conger, Kanungo, and Menon 2000); Conger and Kanungo

1998b; Shamir et al. 1993) have found that charismatic leaders have great influence on subordinates' attitudes and behaviors, such as enhancing motivation, trust in the leaders, low role conflict, improving performance, and inspiring a collective vision for the organization.

Sales leaders in the frontline operation have a unique and vital role to play with multiple and continuously evolving responsibilities. They need to instill a high performance mindset of salespeople while creating a culture that promotes teamwork and competitiveness for the sales operation. Menguc and Barker (2005)'s study acknowledged that it is crucial for effective sales leaders to be well equipped with knowledge-based resources in creating dynamic capabilities within an organization if they want to sustain a long term competitive advantage (Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000). It is through this AR that the participants could develop their respective skills and knowledge by engaging in the process of identifying issues and problems affecting their daily function and thus exploring ideas for action to effect the changes in the operation.

Hence these sales leaders need to capitalize on their sales force's selling skills, abilities and expertise in order to transform their capabilities into dynamic and effective strengths within the sales operation (Bollinger and Smith, 2001). Acknowledging the fact that sales function is critical to the bottom line of organizations, this AR will examine how to seek out effective instruments and

methods to maximize the commitment and performance of sales managers (DelVecchio, 1998). For all purposes, sales managers are charged with developing positive relationship with their salespeople, which means that sales managers are given the task of relationship management. Relationship management is essential for sales managers as they are leading a diverse group of salespeople with demographic and cultural differences. Furthermore, salespeople are generally strong in character and outgoing. They have limited tolerance in action taken (Greenberg and Sweeney, 2012). As a result, it is the role of sales manager (who act as leader) to consider various means to inspire and encourage the sales force to work as a team and share their skills and knowledge with one another (Bollinger and Smith, 2001). This study is consider critical in exploring the interpersonal skill while engaging in the AR cycles of diagnosing, planning, action and evaluating action with one another (Coughlan and Coughlan, 2002).

Therefore, this AR would focus on leadership behavioral change by applying and assessing strengthens of leadership theories. The research model is divided into four stages. The first stage, current practices, is intended to identify how the current leadership behaviors and control mechanism are related to the successful implementation of lead management. These factors are controllable by the regional sales management and they are useful and important insights for sales force management strategy in supporting the region to achieve the 5 years MTP. Stage two, key leadership factors, covers the main sales leaders' variables to be investigated in terms of their importance to an effective implementation of lead management. The

notion of key leadership factors is that these sales managers (HOBs) readiness elements involve methods and practices controllable by the sales managers and regional head. The third stage, effect, includes the outcome of the findings in terms of being effective in implementing lead management. Final stage, confirmation and recommendation, suggests that the recommendation of methodology is to be tested and for full implementation within the region.

In the ever increasingly competitive business environments, organisational survival and success depend to an increasing extent on the performance of middle management in the sales operation (Marginson, 2002). Strategic involvement of sales managers in the strategy execution process is thus a critical requirement in today's business environments. This is evident from past researchers' interest in this field (Marginson, 2002; Dutton, Ashford, O'Neill, Hayes and Wierba, 1997; Floyd and Wooldridge, 1992). Furthermore, Cravens et al. (1993) have pointed out that sales force control systems were regarded as the principle mechanism in enhancing sales force performance. Besides, Baldauf, Cravens and Piercy (2005) highlighted that sales management control system has great impact and significant in leadership effectiveness. It means that by integrating leadership and sales management control system, there are great impacts on sales people behaviors in the long run. As pointed out by Oliver and Anderson (1994), the behavior-based activities require sales managers' consistent guidance, monitoring and evaluating in order to strive for better performance. In addition, Wang et al., (2012) stated that sales force control is organization's formal and informal management in influencing the behavior and

activities of its sales people to achieve desired objectives. Hence, this study would focus on the mediating role of sales managers' leadership in relation between sales force control system and sales people' lead management activities, especially in the directing of behavior-based activities.

Sales unit effectiveness are determined by the skills and efforts of sales people and sales managers, and also being influenced by other organizational and environmental factors such as political, economical, social, technological and competition in the market place. Therefore, sales managers should implement control activities effectively, failing which the performance of sales people would be greatly affected as sales managers are directly responsible for the group of sales people under their charge. Achieving effectiveness is a crucial sales management responsibility of sales managers. Sales managers gain better understanding of salespeople' tasks and are able to motivate their salespeople when they use behavior-based control approach in implementing change within the sales force. Based on Churchill et al., (1985) meta-analysis of sales performance, motivation was found to be one of the most effective predictors of sales performance, as compared to role perception and skills. Motivation is a vital factor in influencing human being to perform better. With an increase in motivation, it will result in higher productivity. Hence understanding and having knowledge about motivation techniques and theories can create and build a strong motivational environment especially in sales. In addition, the application of these motivation techniques and theories can result in enhancing performance and productivity.

Behavior-based control is the day-to-day managing of sales people behavior in executing their sales activities. Piercy et al. (2012) viewed that sales managers have better control over their sales activities and hence it is of great importance to evaluate their behavioral performance as it has direct influence in generating sales. On the other hand, outcome-based control involves the rewarding of sales people achievement. The ultimate purpose is to ensure that the organization is maintained and sustained as an entity. It has vital implications in the process of controlling organizations sales force and activities in order to achieve the organizations long term goals (Hall 2008). Furthermore, Fiedler (1996) pointed out that organization should also focus on creating environments that could enable leaders to exercise effective leadership. On the same key note, Cravens et al., (1993) and Oliver and Anderson (1994) viewed that management control is the key performance indicator of the function carried out by the sales managers in implementing sales activities so as to achieve the desired goal of the organization and sales force (Anderson and Oliver, 1987). Hence, the organization environments that have systematic and structural processes and practices could definitely encourage the leaders to work together and enthusiastically motivating their subordinates so that they could implement lead management effectively and effeciently. As such, organization with effective leadership would be able to lead the sales people to go beyond expectations in implementing lead management.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

As highlighted in Chapter One, the main objective of this action research is to examine the effectiveness of HOB in implementing lead management in TCM Sarawak region. The second objective is to identify factors that influenced the effectiveness in lead management implementation in TCM Sarawak region. The third objective is to develop a process and/or program that can help to enhance the effectiveness of HOB in implementing lead management in the TCM Sarawak region. This chapter provides outlines of a research design to provide answers to the research questions of this action research (AR).

3.2 Epistemological Considerations

3.2.1 Positivism and Naturalism

There are two main competing, yet complementary approaches to social research based on philosophical assumptions about the purpose of science and the nature of social reality. These two approaches are positivism and naturalism (Babbie, 2013; Neuman, 2006). Positivism is a conventional approach to scientific research that holds the principle that the only meaningful phenomena that can be studied scientifically are those that can be directly observed and measured quantitatively (Coolican, 2004). Consequently, positivism is associated with research methods that are inherently quantitative using experiments and surveys to objectively test

hypotheses that are linked to general causal explanations by analysing data statistically (Neuman, 2006). The quantitative approach uses numbers and large samples to test theories (Sobh and Perry, 2006) and is thus associated with scientific rigour in the conduct of research to the extent that the measurement of variables are rigorously tested to ensure objectivity, reliability and validity (Coolican, 2004). Further, positivism is a scientific approach most widely used for business study (Sobh and Perry, 2006).

The naturalist approach is more concerned with a deep understanding of social meaning in context than cause-effect relationships or theory testing (Neuman, 2006). This approach is based on telling the real stories (Babbie, 2013). It is often called a qualitative approach and includes participant observation and field research. The naturalist approach requires researchers to spend considerable time in direct contact with those being studied in a natural setting in order to arrive at in-depth understanding of how participants create meaning in social life (Neuman, 2006). The naturalist approach holds that social life is based on social interactions and socially constructed meaning (Neuman, 2006). Thus, to achieve this goal, it can only be understood by direct contact, direct observation and seeing things through the eyes of those being studied (Neuman, 2006). Hence, the collection of data had to arise naturally.

There are a number of advantages associated with the use of quantitative research. Measurement is the main thrust of quantitative research because measurement allows the delineation of fine differences between people in terms of the characteristics in the research questions (Bryman, 2008). It provides a consistent device for making such distinctions (Bryman, 2008). In addition, Bryman opined that it provides the basis for more precise estimates of the degree of relationship between concepts. The strengths of the positivist quantitative research also lie in its potential ability to establish a cause and effect relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables (Bryman, 2008). Furthermore, the positivist approach, which relies on probability sampling techniques, produces results that can be generalised (Bryman, 2008). The positivist approach has several disadvantages. It fails to give an in-depth picture of the real world because it ignores the dynamism of the people who make up the world and the socially meaningful action that can only be analysed through the direct observation of people in natural settings (Neuman, 2006; Bryman, 2008). Further, the connection between research and everyday life of those being studied is hindered by the use of instruments and procedures in the positivist approach (Bryman, 2008). Another disadvantage is that the connection between the measures developed in positivist quantitative research and the related concepts are assumed rather than real and that respondents who answer a questionnaire may not interpret the same questionnaire similarly (Bryman, 2008).

3.2.2 Research Approach

Social research is about fulfilling an inquiry with answers, information, knowledge, understanding or insights of a particular phenomenon. Research is closely associated with the perspective of how social behaviour or societal reality and the methods it ought to be examined. One of the most fundamental decisions this study has to undertake is the epistemological stance. The approach of doing research can vary but can be broadly classified under two main categories; quantitative and qualitative. Choosing either quantitative or qualitative method in social science is sometimes referred to as the Research Strategy.

Quantitative research can be broadly described as an inquiry that adopts the collection of empirical or numerical data to depict associations of concepts and theories. Quantitative research strategy has a rooted heritage in natural science which explains its scientific approach. Quantitative research is characterised by precise measurement, rigorous value assessment, critical quantitative data analysis and statistical illustrations Neuman, 2006 (Neuman, 2006). Quantitative research is known to fortify a positivistic stance, having an objectified approach to examine social behaviour so that it can help to predict phenomenon from verifiable knowledge derived from the study. In the process to understand social behaviour, positivists assumes that the world function in accordance to deductive rationale and logic where the “reality” can be discovered and explained mathematically (Sobh and Perry, 2006). Therefore, it is common that mathematical model, theories and hypotheses are developed to understand the phenomena in study. The procedure of measurement is the epitome of

quantitative research; establishing link between empirical observations with mathematical representation of relationship quantitatively.

Qualitative research is the other school of thoughts where its historical lineage is closely related to anthropology and sociology. Contemporary qualitative researches are known as interpretivism that embodies activities such as ethnography, content analysis, focus groups and in-depth interviews. Qualitative research seeks for profound understanding of social behaviours and the rationale that governs them (Neuman, 2006). The objective of qualitative researchers is unravelling the “why” and “how” of the behaviours and the underlying reason, not just the “what”, “where” and “when”. Using a naturalistic approach, qualitative researches embody the aim of aggregating prolificacy of knowledge and deep apprehension of subject, of which some researchers feel, would be more appropriate for the investigation of intricate social phenomenon (Skinner, Tagg and Holloway, 2000). Qualitative research avoids rigidity in the quest of knowledge so as to encourage spontaneous creativity, ingenuity and originality. It can be broadly classified that any research that derive empirical findings without means of quantitative proposition or statistical method to express functional relationship is considered qualitative.

3.2.3 Research Strategy Selection

In the selection of research strategy, this study went through some important considerations before that decision could be made. A naturalist approach has been

adopted for this AR, answering the research questions using qualitative research method. These considerations are made with the regards to the issues such as;

Firstly, AR contributes the understanding of practical issues in organizations and to the goals of social science (Rapoport, 1970). AR aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social science by joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework. Action researchers are challenged with both the goal of providing solutions to the real life issues in the organization and also to contribute theoretical knowledge to the community (Mckay and Marshall, 2007; Levin, 2003; Gustavsen, 1993). Both the theory and practical linkage of AR is developed via different cyclical and interactive processes (Coghlan, 2001; Baskerville and Wood-Harper, 1996; Checkland, 1981).

Second, AR is a process of inquiry that helps the organization to solve and improve on operational issues (Parsons and Servage, 2005). In addition, AR is a collaborative intervention in a real life situation to identify issues or problems, and provide a structure for change in the process of solving the problems (Morton-Cooper, 2000). Furthermore, Susman and Evered's (1978) model has been used as the general principle and rule for AR (Mathiassen, Chiasson and Germonprez, 2012). The model includes multiple cycles of diagnosing problem, designing action plan to solve the problem, implement the counter measures, evaluating the outcomes and reflecting on lessons learnt.

Third, the advantage of AR approach is its cyclical process that never gives its possible solution at the first stage, but reflecting on action taken and redefine for new solutions and processes for improvement (Khoo and Hall, 2013); Coghlan & Brannick 2005; Dick, 2006; Marsick & Watkins 1997; Swanson, Watkins & Marsick, 1997). AR approach is useful to managers and findings can be applied to solve workplace problem and issues (Sankaran, Tay and Orr, 2009). Furthermore, Stoecker's (2001) description of AR concurred with Stringer's (1996) argument that AR is a consensual approach to inquire and work from the assumptions that cooperation and consensus making should be the basic activities of AR. As such AR emphasizes the participation and involvements of all parties involved in the study. AR requires naturalistic generalization and knowledge gained from experience. Therefore it is important to develop a robust research strategy in which researcher can infer the findings from Sarawak region. Hence, it is vital that this study applies the best of research methodology by reflecting on the nature of evidence required by this action research and adhering to the principles of research as outlined by Davies (2007), namely, (i) this study selects a sample that aligns with the research objectives, (ii) the sample selected is pragmatic and within the constraint of time and budget that the research is provided, (iii) researcher can gain direct access to the selected sample and, (iv) selecting the sample the best of the research could make it.

3.2.3 Action Research

Kurt Lewin the founding father of organizational development research was also being associated with AR in mid 1940s (Burnes and Cooke, 2012). Lewin (1946)

emphasized the impact between analyzing the effect of action needed and the subsequent action plan required. He further stated that sufficient feedbacks are vital to the subsequent corrective actions needed. Hence, the process of diagnosing, planning, action and evaluation are closely linked in a cyclical process of narrowing the gap and bringing the actions closer to its desired goal.

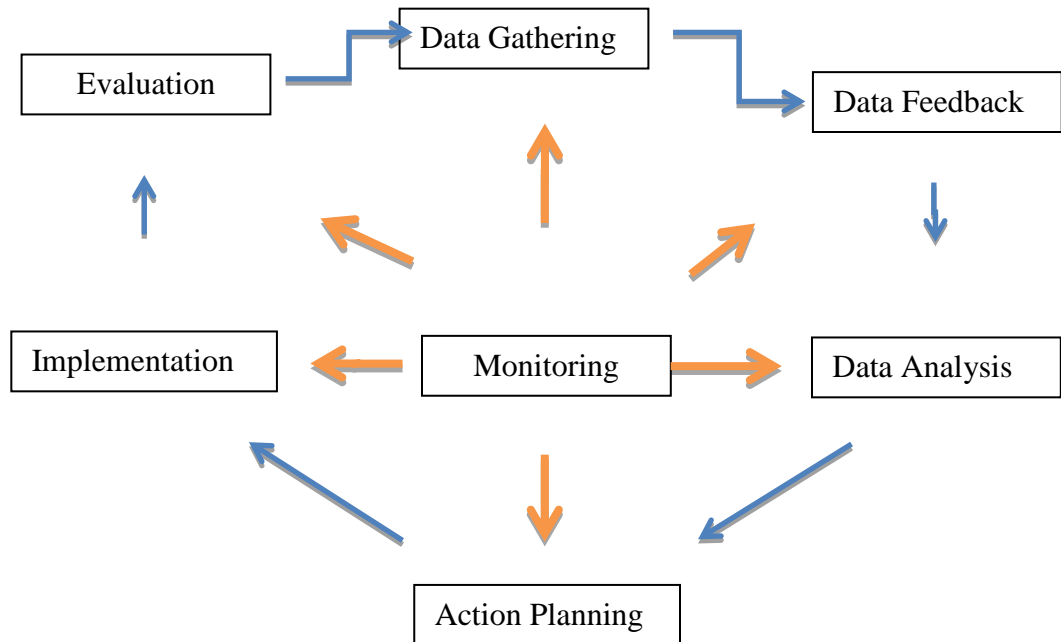
Researchers such as Foster (1972); Susman and Evered (1978); Peters and Robinson (1984); Whyte (1991); Checkland and Holwell (1998) and, McDonagh and Coghlan (2001) argued that AR possesses four characteristics, namely, i) Research in action, and not research about action, ii) AR is participative in nature; iii) AR is concurrent with action and, iv) AR is a sequence of events and approach to problem solving.

On the other hand, Gummesson (2000) expanded further and classified AR in ten major characteristics. These are, i) Action researchers take action: Researcher is not an observer, but a participant who gets involved and takes action; ii) AR has two goals: Dealing and solving practical problems and as a means of developing a structure for change and contribute to science; iii) AR is interactive: requires constant interaction between researcher and the team of participants involved; iv) AR's aim is to develop holistic understanding of a project and recognizing its complexity: Dealing with complex organization system needs an understanding and ability to tackle the multiple causes and effect over time (Senge, 1990); v) AR is fundamentally about change: Understanding the issues and planning for strategic action and implementing on how to arrive at the desired solution are key attributes to the process of change

(Coghlan and Brannick, 2001; Nadler, 1998); vi) AR requires an understanding of the ethical framework: AR ethics needs genuine working relationship between researcher and the team members in understanding the issues and take necessary action (Coghlan and Brannick, 2001); vii) AR can use different techniques of data collection: There is no restriction in the manner of collecting data for the study; viii) AR requires a proper understanding of organization complexity in terms of system and business conditions; ix) AR should be conducted in real time: AR is a real life problem and requires immediate intervention to gain instant reflection and learning in the organization and, x) AR paradigm requires the criteria of its own terms. Reason and Bradbury (2001) stated the preference quality criteria in action research are the co-operational relationship between the team, constant interactive reflections, appropriate and practical methodology, significant of the project and expect solution and, change at the end of project.

To summarize AR is a process of evaluation that provides various iterations of an action being reviewed at each stage of the implementation process and feedback is being channeled back to the cyclical process again (Sharp and Frechtling, 1997; Power, Dale and Jones, 1991). Each AR cycle spirals to another cycle and continues with the process of planning, interventions (actions), and evaluation (Dick 1993). However, Coughlan and Coughlan (2002) concurred with the above process and highlighted that monitoring process takes place in each step, hence, provides opportunity for learning within every step of the cycle (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1
Action Research Cycle



Source: Coughlan and Coughlan (2002)

The above model possesses similar characteristics with Dick (1993), who described AR involves a cycle of planning, intervention (action), data collection, reflection, action, data collection and reflection. As implied by its name, the model is a process of actions and reflections (Dick, 1993).

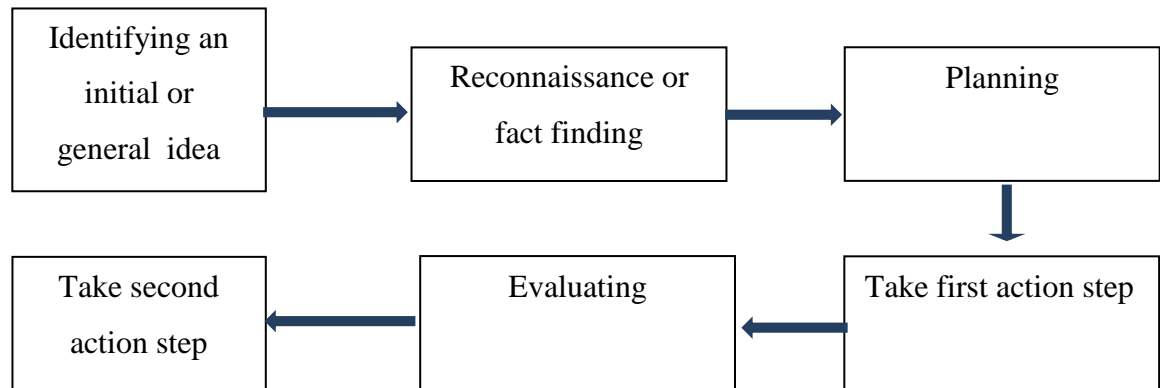
The basis of choosing AR methodology was based on Parsons and Servage's (2005) argument that it is a process of study that identify the real life work related issues and problems, to apply the organizational dynamics and determine the right action plan to improve and enhance the work. AR is defined as a collaborative intervention in a real life issues and to determine the real problem so that an action plan can be determined

to solve the problem (Morton-Cooper, 2000). It means that theory is translated into practice.

AR has various characteristics that differentiate it from the traditional research. Firstly, it is participatory, empowerment, practical, and a collaborative process by a team or group of people. Secondly, AR is the professional learning and growth that could happen while the study is being carried out. AR also provides a platform for change within the organization. As stated by Parsons and Servage (2005), the success of AR is not looking at the academic rigor and a widespread of applicability; instead, it is the degree of how much improvement an organization gain from this study. AR is an approach that would identify and learn how people perceive and interpret the working environment. The working principle of AR outlined by Stringer (1996) was relationship building, improve communication and encourage participation. In addition, AR provides an opportunity to influence a cultural change by getting subordinates to participate in enhancing work processes. Research is about fulfilling an inquiry and examine the perspective of social behavior with answers, information, knowledge, and understanding of certain phenomenon. It is the researcher's personal desire that somehow through this study, positive outcomes and improvements could be gained by organization.

This study will use Lewin's (1946) model of AR (Figure 3.2) stage-based approach for each cycle. Each of the stages derives from an iterative cycle of planning, action and reflection (and evaluating).

Figure 3. 1
Steps in Action Research



Source: Lewin (1946)

Basically, as a participant in the study, researcher needs to be engaged in the entire process of investigating, collecting data, analyzing, theorizing, problem solving and implement action plans to improve the situation. It is cyclical process of reflection to action and back to reflection. Reflection is a process of evaluating the outcomes of action taken so that the next cycle of planning can be further improved from the experience learned when the cycle completed.

From the context and purpose of the study, data and feedbacks are gathered for analysis before action for change is planned by the researcher. Participants then implement or execute the planned actions for the desired change. The outcomes of the action were evaluated through the participants' reflections. The researcher constantly and systematically evaluates the process of the entire AR such as the methods used

for data collection, and also the subsequent development of actions taken. This allows the focus of the research on functionality of relevant data, and also it gives a platform for studying the dynamic, interactive nature of personal experiences that happen in the implementation of lead management by sales managers. Furthermore, it allows the opportunity to evaluate the different components of an action (intervention). Every intervention is being evaluated prior to and also at the final stage of the interaction for its effectiveness. These feedbacks are useful for next course of action taken on each participant (Richardson and Reid, 2006; Sharp and Frechtling, 1997). Using the above step by step framework, the implementation of this study is further detailed in three cycles, as follows (Appendix 3.1, Appendix 3.2 and Appendix 3.3):

3.3 AR Methodology and Tools

Methodological and research design choices are critical to this study in order to contribute to the discipline of leadership effectiveness in implementing lead management. Research methodology varies, but is widely classified under two main categories, namely, quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative research is an inquiry where empirical or numerical data are gathered to depict associations of concepts and theories. It is characterized as scientific approach with precise measurements, rigorous assessment, critical data analysis and statistical illustrations. Quantitative research is classified as positivist approach where the reality of study can be uncovered and explained with mathematical models, theories and hypotheses. It is a conventional approach to scientific research that the measurement of variables is rigorously tested to ensure objectivity, reliability and validity (Coolican, 1999).

However, positivist approach ignores the dynamism of the people and the socially meaningful action that requires direct observation of human behaviors in a natural setting (Bryman 2008). He further argued that positivist approach is based on assumption rather than reality and that respondent who answer the same questionnaire might not interpret the same questionnaire similarly. The findings are based on standard procedures, rules and temporally discrete units of analyses (Galassi and Gersch, 1993; Barlow, Hayes and Nelson, 1984). Nonetheless, the advantages of quantitative analysis are its replicability, reliability and specificity. Furthermore, quantitative findings are summarized by means of graphs and figures which were useful in the interpretation of statistical data.

On the contrary, qualitative approach is known of not having the uniformity procedures and discreteness of analysis. Qualitative research is a naturalistic approach to provide an in-depth understanding of how participants develop meaning in social behavior (Bryman, 2008 and Neuman, 2006). It allows spontaneous creativity, ingenuity and originality of investigating the research issues. The interpretive approach holds that social behavior is based on social interactions and thus requires direct contact, observation and face-to-face interviews of the participants (Neuman, 2006). Hence, for a study focusing on personal live experiences of an individual, the research need to understand the real meaning of that action taken by the individual, especially, in the aspect of thoughts, feelings, beliefs and values. To capture these perspectives, a face-to-face interaction is necessary and vital in the study. The interactions are not superficial.

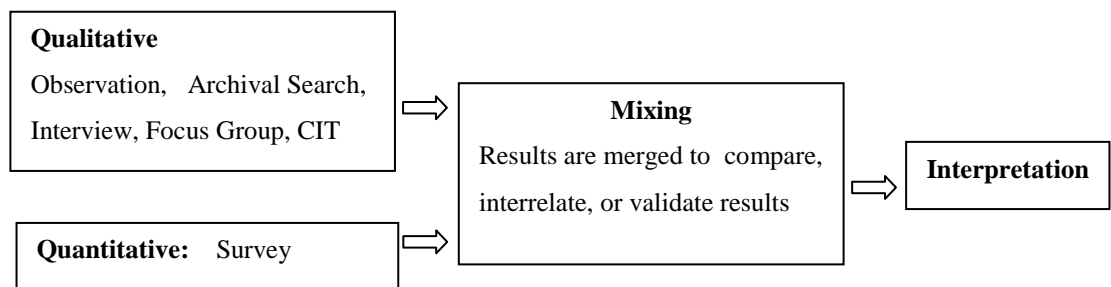
‘Words’ have a concrete, vivid and meaningful impressions that explain the actual world to a reader as compared to the numeric data (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Qualitative research is subjective, constantly changing and is being constructed differently by each individual. Hence, qualitative approach use the trustworthiness approach to highlight the validity and reliability of data collected to provide a representation of the experiences of those involved in the study. The data from qualitative research approach is often in the form of descriptive words and not numbers.

3.4 Mixed Methods

Mixed method approach integrates both qualitative and quantitative methods to build upon the complementary strengths of each method to enhance the reliability, validity and usage of the findings (Mendlinger and Cwikel, 2008; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Creswell and Plano-Clark’s (2007) had developed a model of mixed methods for a triangular approach to interpret data (Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3

Mixed Methods: A Triangulation Design



Source: Creswell and Plano-Clark’s (2007)

Jick (1979) stated that triangulation of data is a methodology applied to combine different but complementary data in order to corroborate results, provide context to results, identify discrepancies between data sources, use as a form of evidence to explore on others and provide various types of data to iron out complex situations (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2007).

This study would use both sequential and concurrent data collection process. The process of data collection, evaluation and reflection are the central of AR. This study would provide both summative and formative analysis of sales managers' leadership behaviors in implementing lead management by applying mixed methods approach where data were collected, analyzed and evaluated at the observation and reflection stages (Hanson, Creswell, Plano-Clark, Petska, and Creswell, 2005; Onwuegbuzie and Teddie, 2003). The repeated reflections and evaluations are the main elements of AR process.

3.5 Justification of Research Design

This AR would mainly focus on qualitative methodology because it allows the researcher to study issues pertaining to current leadership styles in greater details and in-depth findings (Patton, 2002; Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989). Furthermore, qualitative research approach is used to identify the implementation issues that sales managers experienced in terms of lead management activities. To enhance the understanding about lead management implementation, sales managers were

approached as key participants as they are considered as experts and directly responsible for the function. More importantly, data collected is not constrained with predetermined set of analysis, but instead is based on participants' real experiences and interpretations (Coll and Chapman, 2000). The data collected from participants' experiences are the basis in formation of patterns to explain the phenomenon of the study. Questions would be set and present to the participants through the principal research methods, such as interview, both structured and semi-structured and, questionnaires.

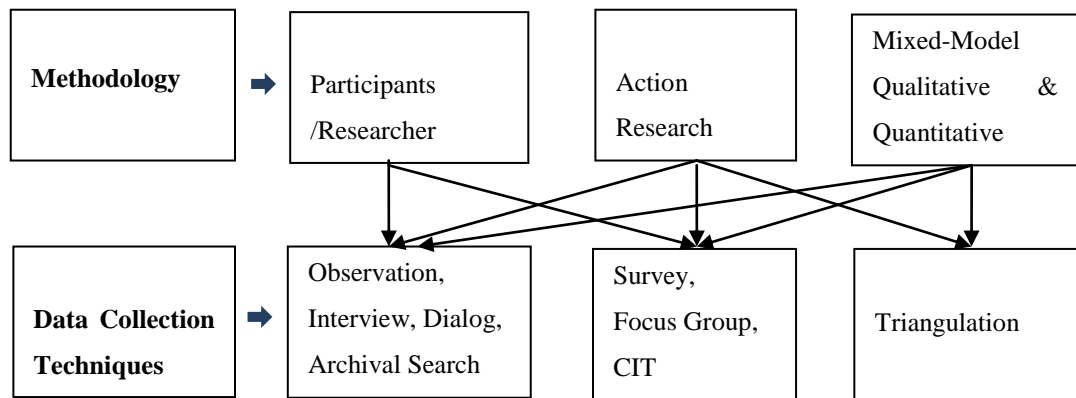
Wolcott (1998) viewed the importance of subjective experiences which has more depth in describing a phenomenon. This process could not be achieved by using quantitative approach as the data of participants' experiences are limited by the predetermined set of research framework. In addition, this study is challenging as it needs the confident and experiences of the researcher to cope with the uncertainty of the complex sales environment and also the ability to implement changes in real time (Coughlan and Coughlan, 2002). This process involves diagnostic and intervention skills and knowledge for issues and problems in the organization.

This AR approach developed for this study is non-traditional and inclined towards qualitative research. The development intervention research approach is influential in its concurrent integration of literature and methodological development (Fawcett, Suarez-Balcazar, Balcazar, White, Paine Blanchard and Embree, 1994). For the

purpose of this study, a framework adapted from Fawcett, et al. (1994) representing the AR approach that provided guidelines is depicted in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4

Proposed Research Design



Source: Adapted from Fawcett, et al. (1994)

The research design for this study would provide avenues and identified a group of middle management participants in TCM Sarawak region in an attempt to improve their leadership skills and management competencies. AR approach includes multiple cycles of (i) diagnosing problem, (ii) designing action plan to solve the problem, (iii) implement the countermeasures, (iv) evaluating the outcomes, (v) reflecting on lesson learn, which when connected become a spiral (Mathiassen et al., 2012).

The purpose of this AR is to explore the effectiveness of sales managers' leadership in implementing lead management (prospecting activities). Therefore, both quantitative and qualitative approaches would be considered. The choice would depend on which could obtain the most relevant data for the study (Greenwood and Levin, 2000).

Though this AR is not limited to specific methods used, but it does follow the stages of traditional research such as defining the research question, developing a research design, collecting and analyzing data and summarizing of results. The difference is on the collaboration approach between researcher and the team members throughout the research process as proposed by Strand et al. (2003). The role of the researcher is not of an expert, but more as a resource individual (Stringer, 1996). Through this process, the researcher hopes to be able to derive solutions through the learning cycle and bring changes to the group and organization.

3.5.1 Population

This AR could examine the effective implementation of lead management by TCM HOBs in the country. However, it is not possible to study the whole population of HOB. This is due to the practicality, limitation and control within each region. The researcher is only focusing on the five HOBs in TCM Sarawak Region.

3.5.2 Data Collection Techniques

Marshall and Rossman (2006) viewed that data collection and data analysis must be done simultaneously in qualitative research as it is an inductive reasoning, reflection process, and not a mechanical and technical process. Through the data collection and analysis process, it allows a deeper understanding of what is being studied and continually seeking for refine solution. As highlighted earlier, predetermined questions were set for the interviews. The purpose is to explore respondents' real life

practical experiences in their day to day sales management and implementation of lead management activities. Data are collected through different ways depending on whether it is hard data or soft data (Coughlan and Coughlan, 2002).

Hard data could be obtained from company statistics, reports, minutes and feedback reports from participants. On the other hand, soft data are collected through observation of behaviors, feedback through dialog and interview. These are more of perception and are descriptive in words. In AR, data collection are done via active participation in the day to day operation and processes by observing the teams at work (e.g. communication process, leadership and team members behaviors, elements of norms and culture), problems being tackled, and decisions being taken (Schein, 1993). Schein (1993) further highlighted that the observation process is the central source of data in AR. The observable process provide the basis for in-depth understanding of the underlying assumptions and their impact on the group at work, such as communication styles, leadership approaches, cultural practices, problem solving and decision making techniques.

3.5.2.1 Participant Observation

Participant observation is an observational role of researchers when they are participating in the action research activities (Creswell, 2002). As stated in Literature Review Chapter, researchers are required to actively involve in the study activities within the operation by having more open dialog with the participants.

Participant observation is an essential element of qualitative studies and demands first hand involvement of researcher. Direct observation of researcher enables the gathering of large amounts of data in a short period of time and in a natural setting. In addition, Coughlan and Coghlan (2002) viewed that observation process provide the basis of inquiry into the relationship between individual participant within the group and also within the operation. The observation process can help in uncovering behavior which participants or sales managers themselves may not be aware of. Furthermore, data collected in this observation process are descriptive in order to understand what happened and how it happened. Participant observation approach could also preserve the naturalism of atmosphere by minimizing intrusion of privacy by studying the team members at arm's length. Notes would be taken as a record. Researcher is also a full participant engaging in every interaction relating to the entire process of study.

3.5.2.2 Structured Interview

As pointed out by Creswell (1994), a qualitative research is based on an understanding of social issues in the natural setting; such as participants' workplaces. Hence, structured interviews are used to gather information from the participants and at the same time, to observe the behaviors of the participants. It is a process to assess participants' experiences, inner perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and feelings of reality (Harrell and Bradley, 2009). In addition, as stated in Literature Review Chapter that effective leader needs to apply democratic approach to gather opinions and suggestions from the sales team before making his final decision. Based on the degree

of structuring, interview can take several forms, including structured interview with identical questions to all respondents, semi-structured interviews, and unstructured interviews (Fontana and Frey, 2005). Interview method is able to observe participants' non-verbal language of reaction and behaviors during interviews. Unstructured interview with open-ended questions enable the participants to express freely and able to clarify on all doubts of the questions asked. At the same time, the behaviors or non-verbal language of the respondents are well monitored so as to avoid dishonest response. Structured interviews are conducted whereby a set of close-ended questions with answers to solicit information from participants.

On the other hand, semi-structured interviews are considered to be more flexible where an interview guide with closed-ended and open-ended questions is given. In this process, the interviewer could adjust the sequence of the questions and also to add questions based on the context of the participants' responses.

3.5.2.3 Dialog

Researchers have studied and reviewed communication processes extensively in the past decades and remained to be an important issue of organization change process. As pointed in Literature Review Chapter, in order to gain insights and have better understanding of organization problems, it is vital to establish a process of dialog in the organization (Burnes and Cooke, 2012).

Schein (1993) stated that dialog is a major component of communication process whereby people could enhance interrelationship of the group and also improving the thought process of problem solving technique. Dialog is an essential tool to develop a climate of collaboration through the combination of listening and talking. Schein (1993) further argued that dialog is considered as vital attribute of organization transformation; therefore, it is important to have an in-depth cultural understanding within the organization.

In a group dynamic outlook, dialog is the fundamental of people skill of trying to understand one another (Schein, 1993). Dialog requires a mind set of discovery where thinking together leads to creating something new or searching for a greater truth beyond what each other has. However, there are some setbacks of dialog, such as, (i) passivity, especially when a person displays and uses statement of withdrawal and having non-responsive behavior, (ii) discounting when a person say something to minimize/maximize, disrespect and put down another person, (iii) redefining or lack of directness that involves not answering a question or changing the focus of the discussion, i.e. avoiding sensitive and uncomfortable issues and, (iv) over-detailing where the person is not honest and might over-emphasize and give excessive inputs.

Johnston (2012) stated that the best leaders have a combination of both humility and ability to listen to all employees for ideas and gained greater employee engagement. She also believed that great leaders should possess and master the skill of courageous

communications with employees. Communication is vital for every successful organization. Employees need to be heard and being understood and not being ignored. Lack of employee engagement is an important issue for many organizations and it would affect the overall performance if communication process is not properly implemented.

3.5.2.4 Appreciative Inquiry

As described in Literature Review Chapter, trust between leaders and employees allows them to interact without fear. Appreciative inquiry (AI) is a type of data collection technique that allows researcher to identify core capabilities or strengths of an organization and employees. Appreciative Inquiry which is based on Bushe's (2011) model of Dialogic Organizational Development is considered to be one of the most effective approaches in organizational development (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987). On the other hand, Oswick (2009) argued that other approaches like "socio-technical systems, strategic change and open-systems planning" were compatible to AI.

However, in action research, AI process (Bushe, 2001) is rather similar with Lewin's approach of change (Burke, 2006) and focuses on learning from experiences of participants. AI approach is based on the understanding of forces and factors that influence an organization to perform better. Through the process, core strengths are

identified and participants can reflect on ways to leverage on them (strengths, successes and potential) to plan for next course of action.

3.5.2.5 Focus Group

As this study moved on to the second cycle, the participants were concerned of the changes required. Literature Review Chapter stated that employees could be encouraged to generate creative and innovative ideas that add value to the organizations. Hall and Hord (1987) defined concern as a psychological activity comprised of reasoning, analyzing, seeking for new processes and anticipating reactions and consequences. The process of change means that an individual has to be mentally prepared. Furthermore, all individuals that go through the change process would be full of anxiety and worry. As such, they would become more sensitive and reacted with the phenomenon of resistance behavior. As suggested by Kotter and Schlesinger (1979), to neutralize and overcome resistance to change, the individuals affected with change have to be involved and participated with the development of new changes and processes.

Hence, to listen to all participants and allow them to make judicious suggestions in determining new processes, the researcher would initiate focus group discussions as it provides an avenue to gain access and focus on issues relating to the real live tasks of sales managers in implementing lead management. Furthermore, the focus group discussion is economical and efficient in obtaining data from various participants.

Krueger and Casey (2000) defined focus group as discussions that were carefully planned in order to gather information relating to a particular issue or problem. Flick (1998) termed group discussion and focus group interchangeably. In addition, Wilkinson (2004) concurred and pointed out that focus group study is a process engaging a small number of people in a group discussion on a selected topic or issue. Focus group is an in-depth and open-ended group discussion that explores on specific issues or problems. Focus groups have the same features of other forms of group discussion. However, focus groups have certain features that are different from the others, namely, (i) A clear plan for a controlled process and atmosphere of interaction among participants, (ii) A structured process of gathering data and, (iii) Selected participants have similar or same characteristics. Hence, this study is using focus group approach as it allows and encourages the participants to discuss freely on their perceptions, ideas, opinions and thoughts on the subject relating to lead management (Krueger and Casey, 2000). Hebbeler and Gerlach-Downie, (2002) stated that focus group is used to seek clarity on people's experience in a program. On the other hand, Lutenbacher, Cooper and Faccia, (2002) viewed that focus group can explore on participants' attitudes and values on solving an issue or problem.

In addition, the open and trusting environment and atmosphere creates a sense of belonging to a group familiar to each other and thus assist in increasing the cohesiveness of participants (Peters, 1993). Hence, the friendly atmosphere makes participants feel comfortable and able to share freely. The focus group exchange encourages dynamic and interactive discussions among the participants (Brown

1999). Thus, the interaction of participants creates the possibility for more open responses and yield valuable data from the discussion. In the focus group discussion, participants take control of the interaction rather than researcher taking command of the discussion. As such, researcher would be able to uncover areas of understanding that often remain uncertain in the traditional in-depth interview approach. Therefore, by applying focus group approach in this study, it can lead to high quality information and thus appropriate decisions to be made by the researcher.

Focus questions were developed to yield ideas and proposals for the sales planning framework and control processes from the group discussion. The questions were open ended to initiate conversation relating to sales planning and control processes. It allowed participants to interpret the questions and answer in their own words. There was no time limit to debate and discuss on these questions, but the researcher was present to prompt and get additional points and facts for the discussions. The data gathered were in the form of feedback from the five participants in answering the five focus questions, they were, (1) Think back and describe what you understand about lead management, (2) Tell me your definition of sales planning, (3) What do you think of when you need to have lead management activities? (4) What roles do you play in implementing lead management activities? And, (5) what other factors affect the success implementation of lead management?

3.5.2.6 Critical Incidents Technique (CIT)

Flanagan (1954) viewed that CIT process is vital as it can facilitate collection of factual data relating to actions of participant in decision making and choices in solving the practical issues and determining solution for the problems. According to Flanagan (1954), CIT is a tool used for observing and recoding unique leadership or human behaviors in a given situation or activity. As an example, Flanagan (1954) has conducted a study to examine pilots' disorientation during flight. The experiences and processes of how pilots' disorientation has taken place were recorded. The data and information collected in this CIT process helped the management to develop countermeasures to prevent recurrences of such incidents.

In addition, Cope and Watts (2000) stated that the approach to studying critical incidents uses terminologies, such as "How did it happen? ..how did you feel ... why ... and then?" Flanagan's CIT was further confirmed by Butterfield, Borgen, Amundson, and Maglio (2005) that supports the fundamental elements of qualitative research proposed by Creswell (1998). The elements are; (i) The research takes place in a natural atmosphere, (ii) Researcher is the main instrument in collecting data, (iii) The data collected are derived from interview, participant observation and dialog and, (iv) Participants are the main focus of the study. CIT approach is beneficial and able to assist in focusing on participants' thoughts and feelings. The researcher, through the application of the CIT, sought to identify: (i) the nature of the selling process situation which leads to it being recognized as critical or important issue and task by the participants and researcher and, (ii) the process undertaken by the participants in

order to manage and solve the issues affecting the effective implementation of lead management. The CIT consists of a set of procedures to gather participants' human behaviors and facilitating input in solving critical issues, problems and tasks in implementing lead management. The objective of applying CIT is to use it as a tool in observing and recording the unique behaviors of the sales managers in implementing lead management. Responses to the critical incident and task depicted in the CIT process would be aligned with the sales managers' action taken. In so doing, participants' behaviors would be established whether they actually do what they have claimed that they have done it as very often leaders would try to cover up their action to avoid embarrassment (Argyris, 1997).

For the purpose of this CIT process, a Critical & Specific Task Dialog Report form was adapted (Creswell, 1998; Snell, 1996). This approach would encourage participants to respond to the real needs when implementing lead management in the branch operation. It also allows participants to express themselves from live experiences and focusing on feelings and values in leading the sales team in executing the planned sales activities. This study of leadership behaviors did not have a pre-determined concept and, instead it was more towards the fundamental assumptions and characteristics upon which the qualitative mode of inquiry outlined by Merriam (1998). The purpose of this CIT process was to reflect the study in which researcher was concerned primarily with process and not the outcomes and, to look into how participants make sense of their behaviors, attitudes and experiences in leading the implementation of change process.

The term implementation means putting into practice of new processes (Markiewicz, 2013). According to Kaplan and Norton (1996), their study conducted among management consultants in the eighties showed that less than 10 percent of formulated strategies have been implemented effectively. Thus, formulating strategy does not guarantee success in achieving the desired goal, but depend very much on the effective execution of the strategy. Essentially it was the participants' ability to rise above their own feelings of failure from past experiences. Hence, an important challenge comes from the proposed sales planning process and management control mechanism and, the practical work which involves participants in wrestling with important but difficult practical issues and problems. Therefore, participants needed to challenge SAs to be actively involved in what they are doing in implementing the new process of lead management activities. It should not be left to chance or luck. The process needed participants to be self-disciplined in order to produce commitment and endurance in executing the lead management plans.

Through the process of implementing changes, participants were asked to record critical incidents and task that they recognised as exhibiting their attitudes and behaviours towards their effective roles in implementing lead management activities. It was through the use of CIT that participants were requested to document incidents and tasks that they had encountered while implementing changes. The critical incidents would be phrased in simple terms that described their experiences as the best times and the worst times (Cope and Watts, 2000).

Participants were to select and describe specific encounters in which they have experienced individually and identified different aspects of their competence in terms of: (1) attitudes - the participant's attitudes and feelings towards the whole experience, reflecting to what degree attitudes such as respect for diversity have been developed; (2) behavior - the interpretation of participant's behavior as well as the behavioral patterns followed by the sales team; (3) knowledge and skills - the participant's knowledge about incidents and situations; the skills applied during and after the event and, (4) action - the action taken by the participants as a result of analyzing the incidents.

Participants were requested to document their experiences in the CIT form (Appendix 3.4) and record critical incidents for personal reflection. The participants were asked to describe occurring task-related encounters of lead management activities in which their interaction with SA reacted in a way they have not expected and being stressful. For each critical incident described they were requested to indicate why their SAs have behaved so unexpectedly and to give their own explanation for the critical points in the incident they described. The participants were also being reminded to describe experiences in which to their surprise they were able to interact without problems and which took place smoothly and harmoniously. Subsequently, researcher would review the forms with the participants. Participants were required to consider the appropriate situation and decide what they feel would be the best or effective behaviors in solving the issues in the incidents. Participants were asked to record two types of incidents: those that have some kind of particularly negative effect, that is,

interactions that made them feel particularly annoyed, insulted, embarrassed, humiliated, and those that have positive effect, that is, interactions with sales people that made them feel particularly happy, proud, self-satisfied, and so on.

3.5.2.7 Archival Search

As part of the data collection process, a variety of documents would be used such as email communications, a journal of field notes, reports and meeting minutes. Documents are gathered and analyzed to supplement observation and interviewing. These documents could assist in developing an understanding of the subject studied. The documents are easy to administer, manage and categorize for analysis purposes.

3.5.2.8 Survey

Survey research is generally used for descriptive, explanatory and exploratory purposes in studies involving individuals as the unit of analysis (Babbie, 2002). The principal reason for this is because it involves obtaining opinions and collecting data from individual respondents and is particularly suitable for research questions about self-reported beliefs, experiences or behaviour (Neuman, 2006). Survey research can be used for testing multiple hypotheses in a single survey study (Neuman, 2006) and is particularly useful for researchers interested in collecting original data for describing the characteristics of a population too large to observe directly (Babbie, 2002; Pinsonneault and Kraemer, 1993). In addition, survey research has an important advantage in terms of economy relative to the amount of data that can be

collected from a sample of a large population (Babbie, 2002). Salant and Dillman (1994) stated that survey is used to assess and evaluate needs, demand, and also impact of the studies. Survey is a data collection tool in a research. Furthermore, as suggested in Literature Review Chapter that the opinions of employees at lower level are important. Surveys are used for answering questions that have been developed and to assess needs in order to determine whether or not the desired objectives have been derived at. It is also meant to determine the base lines to analyze trends over a time period.

There are two approaches to conduct survey, namely cross sectional and longitudinal survey (Babbie, 1973). Cross-sectional survey refers to information being collected only once on a sampling population at a given time. On the other hand, longitudinal survey collects data more than once over a period of time. Longitudinal design's strength is that it yields higher reliability and soundness of knowledge where researcher could have the advantage of building causal relationship with more critical variables and ascertains that overgeneralization do not happen. The unit of analysis for conducting survey may be individual or organizations. Furthermore, this longitudinal approach involves gathering whole cohort of respondents as the focal point of data collection. The cohort is a group of individuals who shares certain similar characteristics. As this study involved cyclical process and data would be collected from individuals who comprised from five HOBs, one Asst. HOB and 60 SAs in each cycle.

On the contrary, Qualitative design allows this AR the flexibility of investigating segregated portion of the conceptual framework while able to obtain insights on how these variables interact and the extent of their influence over a period of time and allowing a multi-dimensional, rather than just cross-sectional, investigation of the subject. At the same time, longitudinal design could help to detect change, the rate and the level of the change from the repeated findings. However, longitudinal design requires large sampling data, in-depth interview and analytical expertise. Cross-sectional and longitudinal studies are quantitative approach.

3.5.3 Questionnaire Design

The review of literatures and the development of AR framework in chapter two resulted in the identification of leadership and management control factors relevant to specific steps within the lead management process. These factors provided direct input into development of the research constructs, identifying main features of themes and categories of the data and subsequently, questionnaires items for interviews, observations, dialog and surveys used in this study. The possible factors that have impact on lead management are identified in (Appendix 3.5), together with its primary sources in the literature:

The patterns, themes and categories of analysis are derived from the data and not being imposed on them prior to collection of data and analysis process. To gain better understanding of what have been studied, the researcher requires the creative process

of data collection and analysis. Researcher would constantly theorize and attempt to make sense of the data collected through interviewing, participative observation, dialog, survey and focus group approach (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998). Hence, the above stated factors were used as the basis of designing and developing questions and items in the instruments.

Questions were developed to conduct face to face interview with the participants within the TCM Sarawak Region. Face to face interviews were conducted with the HOB and SA of all the respective five branches. The interviews were conducted within the first cycle of this study. In addition, to support the triangulation process, a survey questionnaire was developed for the SAs in TCM Sarawak region. The first interview questionnaire “Structured Interview with HOB/Asst. HOB” (Appendix 3.6) was organized into four categories with nine questions. It served to identify the principal characteristics of leadership behaviours of HOB in the branch operation in implementing lead management activities.

First, four questions were designed to explore the participants’ understanding of what they ought to do in respect of achievement oriented leader responsible for setting of individual and collect goals, developing business plan for the branch, assisting SA in preparing daily/weekly/monthly sales activities plan, monitoring and evaluating achievements and, prepared to take new challenges.

Second, three questions were set to identify the HOB's leadership behaviour of setting direction by defining roles of SA, guiding, structuring and scheduling sales activities and, assigning responsibilities for SA and following up on them.

Third, two questions were developed to explore and gain insight of HOB's participative and supportive behaviour of the HOB in showing concern for the sales team when executing lead management activities.

Finally, three questions were used to explore the leadership behaviours of the HOB in terms of management control when executing lead management activities.

The design intent of the above questionnaire was to elicit participants' descriptions around the focal issue, that is, the presence of structural barriers to the successful implementation of lead management and also to secure participants' real experiences (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). The main purpose was to establish at a macro level whether structural barriers were, indeed, significant in the minds of the participants. This interview questions could shape the participants' focus on lead management implementation by requesting them to recollect on experiences on their main sales activities which have taken place daily. More importantly, the researcher deliberately chose not to ask directly about structural barriers or factors that have influenced the effective implementation of lead management, instead to allow the participants' to air

out any potential issues that hindered the successful implementation of lead management. This is in line with the grounded theory of letting the problems to surface directly from the participants (Glaser, 1998)

Basing on the structure of first interview questions, the second interview questions “Structured Interview with SA” (Appendix 3.7) was designed with nine similar questions to confirm SAs’ understanding of lead management activities and also to evaluate HOBs’ support in implementing lead management activities within the respective branches in TCM Sarawak region.

Third, survey questionnaire, “For Sales People Regarding Leadership Support” with seventy four statements (Appendix 3.8a, 3.8b, 3.8c and 3.8d) was adapted from Wilkinson (2005). As pointed out by Wilkinson, sales managers’ leadership behaviours have great influence in sales people’s performance. He further stated that subordinates’ perceptions of their leaders are much more accurate than leaders’ self-perceptions. Hence, it is vital to seek sales people’s feedback with regards to the support received from the respective sales leaders. These survey questionnaires were distributed directly to the respective branch SAs during the researcher’s branch visits. The SAs were briefed and explained on the overview of its purpose and intended usage. The SAs were guided by the researcher when completing the questionnaires. Upon completion, the researcher, with the assistance of RY, collected the questionnaires from all SAs.

Fourth, self-perception questionnaire adapted from Bridges (1991) for “Assessing Change Transition Readiness” (Appendix 3.9) with twenty five statements would be used to gauge and evaluate HOBs’ readiness in the change process in implementing lead management. Bridges’ (1991) assessment instrument is a practical tool derived from his many years of studying organizations change and proven to be very useful in understanding the individual readiness for change. From the questionnaires, the participants’ views expressed are individual and were useful to lead HOBs from multiple and even divergent perspectives. It provides a snapshot of how the situation is during the transition of change.

To ensure confidence and confidentiality for the participants, the interviews were conducted by the researcher with the help of an AO to transcribe verbatim of the conversation. The key words and phrases of text are either being underlined or using coloured markers. No qualitative software program Nvivo is being used for analysis of key words and phrases as the number of participants are five HOBs only. Each participant’s transcribed interview was allocated a code name for identification and confidentiality purposes. The code was created according to the location of the operation. For example, KA referred to participant from Kuching branch. The code BL referred to participant from Bintulu branch. However, the survey questionnaires for SAs were hand delivered to all SAs in the five branches.

3.5.3.1 Pretest Questionnaires

According to Sekaran (2003), it is necessary to pretest the questions to ensure that respondents understand the questions asked by the interviewers. To avoid errors and ambiguous words being used in the questions, pre-test before the start of each interview was carried out to confirm whether the respondents could comprehend the questions asked in the structured interview.

In the first stage of the pretest, interview and survey questionnaires were sent to the Sarawak Head of Toyota Operation, Toyota Branch Manager (Kuching), Director of a Perodua Dealer in Kuching and a Senior Manager of Proton Dealer (Kuching) for comments and verification (Appendix 3.10). These three persons have served as sales managers, branch managers, regional heads in the early days of their career, ranging between 30 to 45 years of experience in automotive industry. Hence, they are qualified to make comment on the readability and clarity of the questions. One of them has commented that the questions are straight forward and easy to understand, but his concern is that majority of SA in automotive industry are not proficient in English language.

In the second stage, the same sets of questionnaires were sent to a senior lecturer of UiTM in Kuching for comments too. All have confirmed that the questions in the questionnaires were simple, easy to understand and relevant to the topics.

3.5.4 Data Collection Procedure and Method

Interviews, focus group, observations and internal documents are the main source of information collected for this study (Creswell, 1998). These approaches play central role in the data collection for this AR. All interview results, survey outcomes and observation findings would be coded accordingly. In the coding process, the researcher recorded themes and categories, events, positive or negative reactions, and evidence of success or failure of leadership effectiveness (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The coding of information started at the beginning of the study to incorporate themes or changes into the AR process of change. It is in the area of contradiction that the importance of early coding is done. By categorizing themes, descriptions and ideas from the early stage of the process, points of contradiction become apparent. Miles and Huberman (1994) viewed that the structure of AR is changeable in its nature. Therefore these categorizing points can then be developed into additions, deletions or revisions to the action plan for this study. Due to the large amount of descriptive data that was gathered for the study, the early use of coding was vital in assisting with data analysis.

Due to logistics constraint, the researcher conducted interview and observation process during branch visits. Thus, the researcher was able to gain access to valuable data set from the branch real operation scenario. The five participants were interviewed personally by researcher. The primary task of conducting interview was to encourage participants to open up fully in the dialog (Chadwick, 1984). Structured interviews which included specific range of questions were asked in a very open

format. This process allowed the participants to reveal comments and input that related to the research topic from within the branch perspective.

The transcript and verbatim were taken by an AO who assisted in all interviews conducted by researcher. The assistance provided by the AO during the interviews allowed the researcher to give his full attention to what was being said and at the same time observing participants' body language during the dialog. Personal observation notes were taken by the researcher during the interviews. These notes aids recall of comments made by participants and able to assist researcher when reviewing the transcripts at a later stage. To ensure confidence and confidentiality for the participants, the interviews were conducted by the researcher with the help of an AO to transcribe verbatim of the conversation. The key words and phrases of text are either being underlined or using coloured markers.

No qualitative software program Nvivo is used for analysis of qualitative data due to the small number of participants (five HOBs only). Each participant was allocated a code for identification purposes. The code was created according to the location of the operation. For example, KA referred to participant from Kuching branch. The code BL referred to participant from Bintulu branch.

In addition, survey questionnaires were used to triangulate the process, that is, by getting SA of all respective branches to participate in the study. This 360-degree feedback assessment on the participants would provide the opportunities to identify critical behaviors of their superiors (Denton, 1994). Denton further stated that 360-degree feedback approaches are considered to be the most effective type of leadership assessment as it provides a comprehensive picture of individual performance and efficiency. The fundamental of this 360-degree feedback is to gather information from the subordinates directly. The approach is much more comprehensive as compared to information gathered from leaders' self-assessments. Leaders' self-assessments are subject to biases and might not provide valid and fair feedback. The 360-degree feedback is a more complete picture of the leaders' behaviors and performances. Hence, leaders are able to learn and realize the impact of their leadership behaviors and also how the subordinates perceive them.

3.5.5 Data Analysis Techniques

Patton (2002) described data analysis as a creative process and it extends beyond the process of identifying, coding, and categorizing the main features of the data. Hence, the patterns, themes and categories of analysis are derived from the data. A creative process means that there is no clear division between the data collection stage and the data analysis stage.

To gain better understanding of what have been studied, the researcher requires the creative process of data collection and analysis. Researcher would constantly theorizing and attempt to make sense of the data collected through interviewing, participative observation, dialog and focus group approach as suggested by Taylor and Bogdan (1998). Kval (1996) concurred that this data analysis process is an ongoing and dynamic process that happens prior to and throughout the collection of data in the research process.

The interviews record served as a permanent record in every interview. This process allowed the researcher the opportunities to get in-depth understanding of the data collected and able to compare with other source of data collected, such as participative observation notes. Participants were made to understand that the transcript of the interviews would be kept as confidential and their identities are encoded to provide anonymity. A separate log book would be maintained. These log book recorded notes relating to interviews, participative observation, dialog and all other activities that took place throughout the research study. Participants also provided branch materials, such as branch action plan and monthly reports, which were included in the log book journal. In addition, company information, such as MTP, sales analysis and other operational records were also recorded in the log books to provide evidence of the study.

3.5.6 Content Analysis

Qualitative data always end in large amount of textual materials that needs to be analyzed and interpreted by using one or more organizing style. Collecting, editing and analyzing data happen concurrently. However, interpretation and analysis start as soon as observation takes place. Flick (1998) stated that the construction of a new theme starts at the stage of field notes which contains material of a specific direction. Themes are broken down into categories and labeled and coded as detailed as possible. Descriptive data is broken down, conceptualized and group in each category. Data analysis rests on the editing process which depends heavily on researcher's intuitive and interpretative capacities in order to generate and illustrate categories of meaning. The purpose is to reduce the data and ensure that they are manageable for analysis and interpretation.

The basic task of data analysis is to make sense out of the information collected. The key ingredient in content analysis is the construction information being categorized. The manifest contents were the verbatim of each interview results and observation notes. In addition, the transcripts recorded the distinct concept related to leadership behaviors as stated in the survey outcomes, journal entries, focus group discussion and CIT reports. In the content analysis process, distinct concept derived from a word, a phrase or a sentence represented individual thought and concept. These individual thoughts and concepts were divided into sub-groups. The emergent of nine categories were organized from the sub-group that has similar concepts or meaning. Subsequently, three broad themes were developed from the nine categories (Miles

and Huberman, 1994). Miles and Huberman (1994) viewed that the structure of AR is changeable in its nature; therefore these categorizing points can then be developed into additions, deletions or revisions to the action plan for this study.

The first substantive data analysis was undertaken with the data from the structured interviews with HOBs. The key phrases used by participants in answering the interview questions represent the raw data of this study. The answers given were transcribed and verbatim. The responses were clustered under the selected category.

The same process of coding, categorizing and developing of themes through constant comparison was done with the data from participant observation notes, focus group discussion, survey questionnaire and other internal documents (Glaser 2003). There was no attempt to force the data into the same category and themes. Qualitative data is complex and easily convertible into standard measurable units (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). As an example, in focus group study, the report on what was discussed is more important than record on the number of people that spoke in the discussion.

3.5.7 Validity of Data

Validity of the data is the main concern in any research. Validity refers to whether the data and findings of a study are true and certain. “True” in the sense that findings are

accurately reflecting the actual situation and “certain” in the sense of data are supported with evidence. Historically, Campbell and Fiske (1959) first started the process by using various methods to collect and validate data in a study. There is a great difference between quantitative and qualitative study. Data collected from a study can be expressed in numerical or quantitative manner. However, data can also be based on experiences of the participants or based on qualitative analyses.

Quantitative research used experimental methods to test hypothetical generalizations (Hoepfl, 1997). The approach placed great emphasis on the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, as pointed out by Denzin and Lincoln (1998). Measurements denotes using numbers to embody characteristics of subject in study as numbers enable statistical analysis of data and rationalize the discourse of measurement rules and findings. In quantitative research, charts and graphs are used to illustrate the results of the findings and employed words such as variables, populations and results as part of the process of conducting research. Kirk and Miller (1986) stated that there are three types of reliability in quantitative research, namely, (i) the degree to which a measurement remains the same repeatedly, (ii) the stability of a measurement over time and, (iii) the similarity of measurements within a given time period. In the findings, a high degree of reliability depends on the degree of stability of the results. On the other hand, validity determines whether the research really measures according to what was expected in the study. Wainer and Braun (1988) stated that the validity in quantitative research as construct validity, where data of the initial concept, notion and hypothesis required is properly

determined. In quantitative research, validity refers to data gathered are accurate and whether they are actually measuring to what was intended to.

However, in qualitative study, the data collected from participants were expressed and stated on experiences of participants. Very often direct quotation or verbatim of statements were recorded from qualitative study. In qualitative study, the emphasis of information is based on the experiences of the participants (Coolican, 1999). Coolican (1999) pointed out that attention is needed on the words used, when did participant pause or speed up in the conversation. In addition, Creswell (1994) pointed out that in qualitative study the inquiry process is based on building a complex and holistic situation and is conducted in a natural setting. Creswell further stated that semi-structured interviews of participants could generate more informative and insightful findings. The findings would be arranged and categorized in groups with statements or words collected from the study. According to Coolican (1999), the concern was not on the total number of statements in each category, but more on the trustworthiness of the meanings, attitudes and understanding discovered from each category.

3.5.7.1 Triangulation

Triangulation is a process applied by qualitative researchers to check and establish validity, (Webb, Campbell, Schwartz and Sechrest, 1966). In addition, Patton (2002) cautioned that the goal of triangulation is not to determine the consistency across data

sources, but instead the inconsistencies have given strengths to the various approaches used. Patton opined that the inconsistencies in approaches allow opportunities to uncover deeper understanding of findings. Guion (2002) mapped out the detail process of how to triangulate and ways of using triangulation as a research strategy, (i) Data Triangulation, (ii) Investigator triangulation, (iii) Theory triangulation, (iv) Methodological triangulation and, (v) Environmental triangulation.

Data Triangulation

Data triangulation involves the use of different sources of data. Traditionally, data triangulation helps to strengthen the validity of the study (Miles and Huberman, 1984). More importantly, it helps to eliminate bias conclusion in the study (Campbell and Fiske, 1959). Denzin (1978) stated that the process of data triangulation, various evaluators are involved, and data are collected in different time frame of the study and by using multiple methods of gathering. The methods used could be interview, participant observation, focus group, CIT or survey.

Investigator Triangulation

In order to triangulate the data, it would be necessary to assign different team members to serve as evaluators or investigators. They would be given the same observation check sheet for pre and post observations. They would be using similar method (interview or observation) to gather the information. The different findings would be compared. And should the outcomes of the findings are having similar

conclusion, validity has been established (Guion, Diehl, and Debra McDonald, (2011). Guion et al. (2001) stated that the findings derive from all of the methods should conclude and establish the validity of the results. They further suggested that, in order to strengthen the validity, evaluators for the various methods should come from different disciplines as they could interpret the information from a different perspective, but in the same way. However, people from the same disciplines can also be used, provided that they are from different positions or status. However, this method of triangulation requires more time to analyze the information collected by the different sources and might not be applicable in all scenarios.

Theory Triangulation

In theory triangulation, the same set of data is interpreted by multiple professional (Guion, 2002). As such, professional from different disciplines or positions interpret data in various perspectives. Hence, if these professionals could interpret the data in the same way or draws the similar conclusions, then validity is established.

Methodological Triangulation

Methodological triangulation means using multiple qualitative and quantitative approaches to evaluate the data. If the conclusions from these approaches are similar, then validity is established (Guion, 2002). This approach allows interviews, participant observations and documents to be used simultaneously to access the data. Survey could be used on the participants, their family members and co-workers, including subordinates. Should the conclusion of findings are similar, validity in the

findings have been established then. This approach is considered to be one of the most popular methods used in triangulation process. However, this approach needs more resources and time to evaluate and analyze the data collected.

Environmental Triangulation

This approach uses different locations, setting and other key variables related to the environment in which the study is conducted, examples are, time of the day, which day of the week and the season of the year. These environmental factors could influence the information collected during the study. If the findings remain the same under different environmental situations, then validity is established (Guion, 2002).

3.5.8 Summary

This chapter outlines research design of AR and describes the research methodology, data collection techniques, questionnaires design, data collection procedures, data analysis techniques, content analysis and validity of data. The HOBs' behaviors in implementing lead management in TCM Sarawak region was examined through mixed method of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Participants' behaviors, experiences and opinions provided have given the researcher a rich source of data to address the research questions. The researcher would be using interviewing, participant observation, dialog, focus group discussion, CIT and survey to collect data. Participants were engaged in structured interviews. Focus group discussion and

CIT were used and allowed participants to recall, share and describe their experiences in implementing lead management.

Finally, data triangulation, methodological triangulation and environmental triangulation methods would be applied to increase the validity of findings in this study as the data collected were from different sources, different locations and setting, different investigators and different time frame. The triangulated analyses would put equal weightage when interpreting the data collected from a variety of sources (Cresswell and Plano-Clark, 2007). The advantage of this process is that it provides equal opportunity for the data collected from various sources to be analyzed. Triangulation allows convergence and corroboration of results (Greene, Caracelli and Graham, (1989). The application of multiple data collection sources allows repeated measurement processes, and thus enhance the reliability, validity and applicability of the findings, even with a small numbers of participants involved in this study (Barnett, Pepiton, Bell, Gilkey, Smith, Stone, 1999; Slonim-Nevo, 1997; Galassi and Gersch, 1993).

CHAPTER FOUR

ACTION RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

As is evident from the literatures detailed in Chapter Two, the assumption of the field is that the broad question underpinning this AR should therefore be: Are the sales managers (HOBs) of TCM Sarawak Region effective in implementing lead management in their respective branches? The key research and practice interest of this study would focus on: 1) The extent to which the sales managers influence the SAs in implementing lead management; and, 2) How the leadership alters the process and progress of implementing lead management.

This chapter outlines the chronology of events that have taken place in every stage of the AR cycle based on Lewin's (1946) model (diagnosing, planning, action and evaluation/reflection). Upon completion of each cycle, the evaluation outcomes would be used to reflect and articulate the learning to overcome issues that inhibit successful implementation of lead management activities by HOBs. First cycle details the facts finding process of identifying the factors influencing the effective implementation of lead management in Sarawak Region. Focus group discussion is used in second cycle to determine the appropriate solution to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of implementing lead management in Sarawak Region. The second cycle follows with the application of critical incidents technique (CIT) whereby participants' behaviors and experiences of implementing the new processes are

recorded. The final cycle records the processes of seeking HQ top management's endorsement on the outcomes and recommendations of this study and the subsequent adoption of standardization processes in the company.

4.2 First Cycle

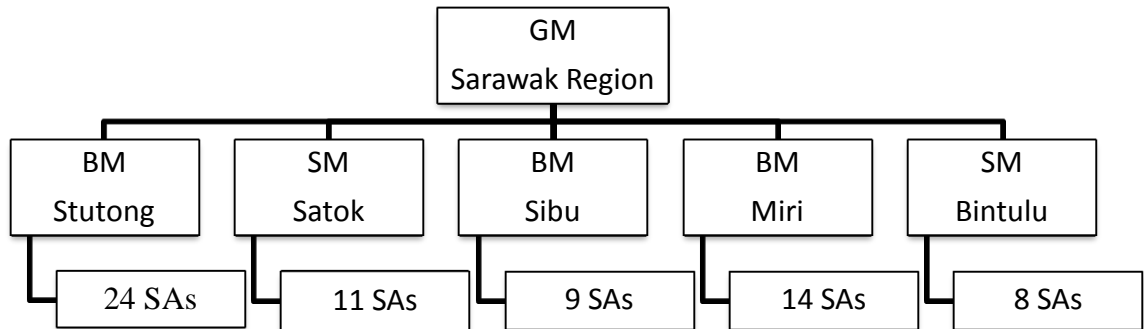
At the time of commencing first cycle, some information was available detailing the profiles of HOBs, SAs and branch performances. This dearth information provided some insights of HOBs' leadership capabilities, behaviours, strengths and weaknesses; SAs' diverse and complex background and their tasks; and, the past years sales performances of the five branches. As outlined in chapter three under research design and triangulation process, the first cycle started the diagnosing and fact findings process of soliciting data through the various methods, namely, structured interview, participant observation, archival search and survey by different investigators and at different time frame; followed by editing data, interpreting and identifying of themes and categories of the facts; and, reflection of final results ended the first cycle.

4.2.1 Branch Profile

TCM Sarawak sales operation is supported by five branches headed by three branch managers (BM) and two sales managers (SM) as HOBs (Figure 4.1). There are a total of sixty six sales advisors (SAs).

Figure 4.1

TCM Sarawak Region Sales Organization Chart



4.2.2 Branch Sales Advisors

The data obtained for SAs profiles is derived from the archival search as suggested in Chapter Three. In Sarawak region, there are a total of sixty six SAs in the five branches with a group of diverse individuals comprises of different ethnic group and cultural background, academic level, young and olds and different number of years of car sales experience (Appendix 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5 for Stutong 24 SAs, Satok 11 SAs, Sibü 9 SAs, Bintulu 8 SAs and Miri 14 SAs respectively). Almost all branches, except Sibü, were having more than fifty percents of their SAs that have less than two years experiences in the sales operation: 58 percent Stutong (14 out of 24 SAs), 100 percent Satok, Sibü 44 percent (4 out of 9 SAs), Bintulu 63 percent (5 out of 8 SAs) and Miri 71 percent (10 out of 14 SAs) . Satok branch was newly set up in late 2011. Hence, all the SAs have less than two years working in the company.

As Nissan brand was not popular in Sarawak market, only a small percentage of non-Chinese SAs have joined the sales operation. Only Stutong (8 percent), Satok (27 percent) and Bintulu (12 percent) were having Malay SAs. However, the total number of Iban SAs was much higher than the Malay SAs, except Satok branch: Stutong 25 percent, Satok 9 percent, Sibul 11 percent, Bintulu 38 percent and Miri 14 percent.

SAs' daily tasks are reflected in the specific steps of sales process as highlighted in Chapter One (Appendix 1.9). It starts with identifying leads and prospects and ends with the follow-up of customers in the entire sales process. The SAs tasks are simple, but require systematic or professional approach in executing the activities. Hence, the experience and maturity of SAs are of great importance in the selling process. As such, HOBs play a very significant role in guiding, mentoring and coaching the SAs in the sales process.

4.2.3 Branch Sales Performance

The sales records were obtained from TCM internal record which is part of the archival search as suggested in Chapter Three. In Sarawak, the branches monthly average sales (Appendix 4.6) for 2011 were far below expectation. Based on the TCM company requirement, SA monthly average sales should be four units, thus, the branches need to put in effort to improve SA overall performance.

As reported in Appendix 4.6, the sales vary in terms of product model. As an example, Sibü and Miri branches were considered a 4 x 4 (Navara, X-Trail and Frontier) market, where their sales contributions for the branch were 34 percent and 42 percent respectively. Bintulu was doing well in 4 x 4 sales (28 percent), but also being supported strongly by the van sales (Urvan) with 34 percent. On the other hand, Stutong, Satok and Sibü branches were performing well in the Livina segment with 34 percent, 36 percent and 34 percent sales contribution respectively. However, Stutong branch performed well in the 4 x 4 models as the branch has signed fleet purchase contract with a local company.

4.2.4 Profile of Participants

As stated earlier, there are five branches in ETCM Sarawak. Each branch is headed by either a sales manager or branch manager (Figure 4.1). The following HOBs' individual profile is based on researcher's personal observation and experience in handling these five branches. In addition, HOBs traits mean scores (Appendix 4.7) were summarized from personal observation and interviewed by four committee members of this AR, namely, researcher, Robert Lim (RL), Roy Bong (RB) and Rosalind Yap (RY). These four committee members rated the HOB based on their past encounters with them. For purposes of identification and confidentiality, code names were used for the HOBs and committee members. The personal profiles were obtained from their respective resume kept in the Sarawak Regional human resource department which is part of the archival search as suggested in chapter three.

HOB: Kent Ang (KA)

KA was 44 years old. He joined TCM regional office as Regional Administration Manager in April 2008. He graduated from Oxford Brookes University with a bachelor degree in Computer Science in 1996. Prior to joining the company, he was a lecturer in Informative Institute, Kuching for 8 years and College Manager of Cosmopoint College, Kuching for 2.5 years. His previous working experiences has given him added advantage in his competencies and skills, such as, planning and organizing events, sales and marketing skills, counseling skills, administration work, managerial function. These experiences enabled him to undertake administrative reform effort within the branch operation. He is fluent in English and able to communicate effectively.

However, he has a strong personality. At the current age of 45 years old, he is full of zeal in his role as head of sales. His leadership style is characterized as transactional and aggressive in his approach as he was pushing hard on SAs in achieving sales targets. In fact, his leadership has proven to be the most aggressive (among the five participants), as well as controversial because a great majority of SAs were not happy with his hard approach. As evident in the HOBs Traits findings (Appendix 4.7), KA was recognized as having strong and capable leader with the overall mean score of 3.7. His outstanding strengths are adaptability, flexibility, and communication (oral

and written) with mean scores of 4.0, 4.0, 4.5 and 4.3 respectively. However, team building and decisiveness were rated as positive with 3.3 each, but the results are the lowest of the fourteen attributes (Appendix 4.7).

In the absence of past sales experiences in automotive industry, especially in the frontline and managing a team of sales people, KA exerted his leadership capability authoritatively in implementing lead management activities immediately after he was transferred to the branch operation in Feb. 2010 as HOB of Stutong branch. However, with his academic background and past experiences, he is good in planning and organizing events, especially sales activities. He was fluent in English speaking even though he was educated in Chinese school in his young days. He communicated well and able share information effectively in leading the sales team.

As evident in mean score for adaptability and flexibility, KA was confident in leading the branch even though he has no automotive sales experience before. He adapted well in the new function as head of branch ever since he was redesignated and being transferred from regional administration office.

HOB: Kien Chang (KC)

KC is 48 years old, the oldest among the five participants. KC joined TCM new branch at Satok in late 2011. He was one of the three non-graduate HOBs and only completed secondary school education (SPM). Prior to joining the company, he was

working with Ford Motor as sales advisor for 16 years and EON Bank as Marketing Executive for 4 years. The 16 years working experience as SA in automotive industry has elevated his role as head of branch. SAs were able to look up to him for advice, especially in the process of closing deals with potential customers. He was confident in negotiating and closing skills and well versed with used car market or valuation. As such, he was well respected and accepted by the young and inexperienced SAs.

Similar to KA, KC has a strong personality in terms of selling approach. In the early days of leading the branch, KC was eager to change SAs' thinking and trying hard to influence their ways of implementing lead management activities. KC adopted the aggressive approach and recognized as arrogant leader by the branch SAs. In the daily sales meeting, he often shouted and scolded the SAs when giving orders and instructions.

Being new in the branch, KC adapted well and able to build and inspire the sales team in organising lead management activities even though he was aggressive in his approach. As evident in the HOBs Traits assessment, he obtained a strong positive mean score of 4.1 (Appendix 4.7), one of the highest score in Sarawak Region. Despite having lower scores in planning skill (report writing) and achievement-oriented mindset, he is recognized in the traits assessment that he positive in his leadership roles, especially trying to build up a productive team for this new operation. Furthermore, KC was very supportive by participating in the sales

prospecting activities. He was passionate to get the sales force to organize sales events well as he was concern about the group's performance.

HOB: Sunny Woon (SW)

SW is 43 years old. He joined TCM regional office as Regional Operation Manager in February 2008. He graduated with a bachelor degree in Business Management from New Zealand. Prior to joining TCM, he was working in Toyota Motor Asia Pacific, Singapore for 6 years and joined UMW Toyota Motor, Sarawak regional office as Field Operation Manager for 2 years. The management experiences in Toyota enabled him to be competent in management report writing. The two years working experience in UMW Toyota Sarawak was mainly focusing on report writings for the Regional Head. After joining TCM Sarawak Regional office, he was posted to various branches and served as acting HOB for a couple of months; four months in Stutong Branch before KA took over as HOB; six months in Miri branch before MA was recruited as Miri HOB. Subsequently, SW was transferred to Sibü as HOB.

Being a graduate and residing in New Zealand for almost ten years, SW was very fluent in English and able to communicate effectively. In addition, SW is a "Foo Chow", the main local dialect spoken in Sibü town. Therefore it was appropriate for SW to be the HOB for Sibü as all the SAs, except one Iban SA, were from "Foo Chow" clan. The local SAs accepted him and SW could mingle well with

them. However, few months after taking over the branch, SW started to exert pressure on the SAs as he realized six out of eight SAs were not taking heed on his instructions, especially in implementing lead management activities. Hence, it is not surprising to note that the HOBs Traits mean score for Assertive (with a score of 4.3) was one the highest in his assessment. SW has to rely on his authority as HOB and instructed SAs to follow his orders. He is very persistent in his action (with a mean score of 3.8). He used autocratic approach in running Sibuh branch. It is not surprising that the mean scores for team building and motivation were having lowest scores (Appendix 4.7). SW is active in assisting SAs in closing deals. He likes to joined SA in seeing prospects and helping them to close deals. However, such action and behaviour has affected his overall role as HOB, especially in managing and controlling the sales team.

HOB: Mary Anne (MA)

MA is 33 years old. She joined TCM Miri branch as Sales Manager in late 2008. Prior to joining the company, she was the branch manager of MAA Insurance for 5 years. She is a non- graduate, with SPM qualification. However, her experience in the insurance industry has made her to be a strong motivator. She demonstrated this skill in her leadership approach of inspiring the young SAs in the branch. Furthermore, being a new HOB in the branch, MA recognized her basic role of inspiring the team of SA to take up the challenges in this competitive market.

Being the only female among the male HOB in Sarawak Region, MA demonstrated a motherly character in caring for her sales team. Her leadership is relationship driven. MA modelled a relationship that placed high value on every SA. The high quality of relationships between MA and SAs has paved the way for their mutual respect and trust with one another. She was prepared to listen and communicate effectively with the sales force. She allowed SAs to share and express their concerns because by doing so the SAs could feel that their contributions are being appreciated. Hence, the group of SAs were always prepared to support MA. The team of SAs were close to MA due to her relational approach. She is the only HOB in Sarawak region who is able to create a culture whereby SAs were able to give feedback voluntarily.

Similar to KC, MA was rated as one of the two highest overall mean score of 4.1 (Appendix 4.7). Possibly, it could be because both of them were the new HOBs in TCM branch operation and they are having self-inspiration and trying to make it happen in their assignments. Her last five years working experience in insurance industry has given her added advantage in inspiring her young team of sales force as twelve of her fourteen SAs are below forty years old. As such, she has strong positive mean scores of 4.3 for motivation, team building, and adaptability (Appendix 4.7). MA also demonstrates participative approach in her leadership style with mean score of 4.3 under cooperative and supportive. Her sales team was active in organizing sales prospecting activities which required them to stay overnight due to long distant from the branch. It required three to four days for any single event to be organized.

Hence, it has affected MA in executing her overall as effective HOB in the branch. She spent very little hours in monitoring and evaluating the SAs performance.

HOB: Billy Lum (BL)

BL is 45 years old. He joined TCM Bintulu branch in 2007 as sales executive. He completed his upper secondary school with HSC academic qualification. Before joining the company, he was the sales advisor of Ford Motor and Proton dealer for 22 years. These frontline sales experiences have given BL the added strength in leading the sales team, especially in the area of evaluating and determining the market prices for the used vehicles. However, he lacks in management skill.

BL is considered the weakest HOBs in Sarawak region. His overall mean score is 3.3 (Appendix 4.7). Being educated in a Chinese school, BL was not fluent in English speaking and report writing and was rated with the lowest scores of 2.8 and 3.5 (Appendix 4.7) respectively. He has an inferiority complex when approached by his superior. However, he is able to communicate well with his sales team as he could use local dialect in their conversation. He has problem in building up a strong team with a mean score of 3.0 for team building (Appendix 4.7). He lacks in persistency (mean score of 3.3) and not able to assert his authority (mean score of 3.5) over the sales team, especially the senior SAs. Hence, he has started to bring in new SAs as the young SA could follow his instructions. BL did not demonstrate a dominant

character as he was not able to convince and influence his sales people, especially in implementing lead management. Apparently, one of his senior SA, who is very experience in car sales, has greater influence in the branch. The situation has made BL face difficulties in controlling his sales team. As such very often BL could not make decision in leading the sales team as there were always clashes in sales closing between the SAs of the branch.

HOBs' Tasks and Activities

A head of branch (HOB) is the leader of the whole branch. In general, there are many roles expected of him. At all time, he is expected to guide the SAs by setting himself as the role model. He or she is a man/woman of his words especially when it comes to making commitments of used car valuation, vehicle discounting, stock status and others. The HOB should be able to initiate and motivate SAs to help them to achieve what he wants for the good of the branch. In addition, the HOB is required to balance delicate matters concerning issues which are deemed to be sensitive in highly competitive environments. For example, same discount or same used car valuation is given to Customer A who has approached two different SA of the same branch. Thus, not only he must have the ability to gain acceptance and support from his sales force, but he must also be able to show his willingness to serve his SAs. The practice of the branch sales operation was shaped by a complex relationship between sales/branch managers (HOBs) and sales advisors (SAs) while implementing lead management activities. The desirable characteristics of SAs are being recognised as self-driven individual who abides to standard sales operating procedures, having sound product

knowledge and possessing good customer service to customers. In practice, HOBs need to develop sales and business plan for their respective branches to enable them to achieve their respective targets. Head of branch (HOB) is responsible to implement sales prospecting activities (lead management) in order to generate leads and converting them into sales to achieve branch monthly target.

4.2.5 First Cycle AR Field Work

This section presents the process of soliciting data, editing data, interpreting and identifying of themes. As described in Chapter Three item 3.5.7 (validity of data), insightful descriptive data, key words, phrases and quotations from discussions of interviews, reports, researcher's observation notes, dialogs, minutes of meetings and survey were being transcribed and analysed accordingly.

Researcher initiated a plan to implement lead management as one of the strategies to increase sales at all the branches in Sarawak region. An AR committee was formed for this purpose with Regional Manager (RL), Operation Manager (SW), Training Manager (RB), all HOBs and an Assistant HOB. Two Regional administrative officers were invited to join the committee to assist in the administration and to conduct follow-up on programs and activities developed by the researcher.

The first Lead Management meeting was conducted on 15th Feb 2012. In order to prepare the staff and gear them towards the challenging tasks ahead, the researcher pointed out to the committee members that the immediate focus of the team would be on the sales processes which were closely related to the daily operations of branches. Furthermore, this was the area that the regional head has direct control, influence and make changes. The researcher reiterated the sales managers' (HOBs) traditional approach of just putting the sales force in the fields and see how they perform is no longer acceptable in today's highly competitive environment. HOBs need to be more than just figure or number keepers. They have to initiate strategic plan and monitor the sales force's execution of sales plans (lead management activities) for them to make an impact on sales results. In addition, the meeting was focusing on factors relating to leadership and management control that would impact the implementing of lead management. It was consistent with the independent variables that were stated in AR model framework of Chapter Two. This AR framework has identified leadership and management control as independent variables that have influence and impact on lead management process.

During the discussion, HOBs recognized that leadership is the key ingredient to determine the success of implementing lead management. Sales force effectiveness is greatly influenced by the leadership of sales leaders. Furthermore, sales people's performance needs to be monitored and evaluated in order to facilitate appropriate remedial action. Training, coaching and motivation are vital factors in enhancing and influencing SAs to perform better and thus, will result in higher productivity. In

addition, the meeting has identified sales management control system as the principle mechanism in ensuring better sales force performance as it has significant impact in leadership effectiveness in implement lead management. Lead management process allows the frontline staff and sales team to capitalize opportunities through the sales process. Lead management could create great opportunity for the sales people as the process could proactively monitor leads that could be converted into sales opportunities from both short term and long term perspectives. Hence, this discussion would focus on the mediating role of HOBs leadership in relation between sales management control system and SAs lead management activities.

4.2.6 Structured Interviews with HOBs

As reflected in Chapter Three, structured interview is not only being used to gather information, but also able to observe the real behaviours of the participants directly. Hence, HOBs were being interviewed by researcher during his branch visit from 20/2/2012 to 5/3/2012.

The question prompted HOBs' awareness of their key responsibility as head of branch to show concern for their subordinate in achieving the goals. Furthermore, being the head of branch, HOBs should know the progress and outcomes of SAs' daily prospecting activities. In response to this first question, four out of the five participants reacted negatively with the following comments:

Do you monitor your SA's leads/prospects every day? If no, why?

MA: No, occasionally [SIC]

BL: No time (in mandarin) [SIC]

SB: No, do it randomly (twice a week) [SIC]
KC: Not everyday [SIC]
KA: Yes

Only one participant (KA) responded with *Yes*. However, upon checking with his assistant (KW), the answer was

KW: Yes, prospect got la” [SIC]

What KW meant was that the branch was more interested for immediate sales by examining the prospects that were ready to buy and not the leads or contacts received for each day. Apparently this was not the only branch focusing on hot prospects instead of leads and contacts generated every day.

Question Two was developed to solicit information on HOB’s management skill in developing a plan for sales force to sustain the long term productivity of SA. The daily sales plan will give concrete steps to move SA towards a greater success in a longer perspective of sales career. However, more than half of the participants acknowledged the requirement of a sales plan, but responded that insufficient time has prevented them to do so. The common answers and comments made for the questions were:

Question No. 2: Do you plan prospecting activities for the SA every day? If no, why?
MA: No, because activities very full already [SIC]
BL: SA don’t have time [SIC]
SW: No, time not enough [SIC]
KC: Yes, every week. SA action plan can show the effort [SIC]
KA: Yes [SIC]

It was not surprising to receive the above answers as most of the HOBs felt that they have other more important tasks to do every day. Insufficient time was their main reasons for their failure to plan for the SAs.

During the first Lead Management held on 15th Feb 2012, the regional manager (RL) reminded all HOBs on the needs of planning daily sales activities for their SAs. Three HOBs (KA, BL and BW) expressed their concerns that most SAs would not follow their sales plan. However, the researcher has advised and encouraged HOBs to persuade SA to follow the daily sales plans.

Question Three was set simply for participants to exam their actions in setting goals for the branch in implementing lead management activities so that the branch long term goals can be achieved. In essence, the participants responded confidently and expressed that they were already doing their very best in organizing the sales plan.

The followings were participants' responds to the question asked:

Question No. 3: How many prospecting activities were planned for a month?

KA: Everyday [SIC]

KW: only Monday is free....16 canvassing + 3 road shows...lesser showroom activities (in mandarin) [SIC]

KC: At least 10 and SAs have their own plan too (in mandarin) [SIC]

SW: 3-4 [SIC]

MA: 10 per month [SIC]

BL: 4 to 6 [SIC]

However, in the earlier questions, participants mentioned that they have no time to plan for daily sales prospecting activities. On the other hand, they were having 3 to 19 activities plan for the month as reported under Question 3 above. Based on the reports, the sales planned prospecting activities were insufficient for the branch. Despite many reminders from researcher that daily plans are crucial in generating leads and prospects, yet HOBs have failed to follow the instructions.

Question Four was developed to gauge the level of understanding and support of HOBs in respect of lead management activities implementation. The participants' responds given for the questions were as follows:

Question No. 4: Do you find the prospecting activities helpful for SA in getting prospects and leads? Why?

KA: Ya. No contact will become more contact. [SIC]

KW: to be frank, I feel got.....SA feedback got..... [SIC]

KC: Yes. This is how to look for people..... [SIC]

SW: Definitely. Gather information for prospect [SIC]

MA: Yes. Because that's the way they meet people [SIC]

BL: Ya. They will have more sales [SIC]

Prospecting is the first step of identifying leads. It is a process of building up and preparing the sales people to be competent in selling skill, product knowledge and professionalism in handling leads or prospects. It was HOBs' daily routine of checking whether their SAs were having prospects ready to buy the products.

Question Five set the pace for HOB to recognize their important task of ensuring success in every plan that they have organized. HOB's role of accountability of ensuring success in implementing lead management activities is vital as an effective sales leader was not only committed to the adherence of proper implementation process, but the check and balance of evaluating the success and short-comings of the planned activities.

Question No. 5: Do you have post event evaluation report for all prospecting activities?

All HOBs: Yes

The answer given by every participant was positive. However, the researcher could find no evidence of report in the branch. Apparently the evaluation on each activity was always based on dialog in the branch meeting as sales team that were involved in the events and activities were required to update their last outings (of events).

Question Six, Seven and Eight allow HOB to describe their leadership behaviours in terms of supporting and encouraging SAs to participate in prospecting activities in order to improve their respective performances.

Question No. 6: Did all your SAs join the planned prospecting activities? If no, why?

KA: No. Because they need meet customer, some got appointment..... [SIC]

KC: Yes [SIC]

SW: Yes [SIC]

MA: Yes [SIC]

BL: Yes [SIC]

The above positive answers apparently contradicted the opinions in the early stage that senior SAs might not join the planned activities as highlighted in Minutes of meeting dated Feb 15, April Report of KA & KC, May & June Dialog Report with KA, May Dialog Report with SW, KC, MA, & BL and also comments made to researcher during his branch visits. Embedded in the meaning of honesty or sincerity were participants' leadership behaviours in having a serious commitment to demonstrate personal attention to their SAs in implementing lead management.

Question No. 7: How often do you join the prospecting activities in a month?

KA: 4 – 5 times, around once a week. [SIC]

KC: Out of 10, I will go 8 [SIC]

SW: All [SIC]

MA: All [SIC]

BL: Join no, but monitor....normally leave it to SA themselves to do (in mandarin) [SIC]

Based on the above feedback, apparently only SW and MA have shown one hundred support to all the sales activities. However, the actual number of planned sales activities as reported in Question Three was negligible and yet HOBs, especially KA and BL have failed to give personal attention to the sales team.

Personal attention were values reflected in both honest intentions and honest actions as participants need to make clear what they stood for, that is, to ensure and encourage all SAs participate in branch activities.

Question 8: Are all your SAs supportive in the prospecting activities? If no, why?

KA: Yes, so far so good. [SIC]

KW: KW: Definitely Yes, some lazy sure will have a lot of excuse.... [SIC]

KC: Not all, but majority....some don't buy the idea [SIC]
SW: Yes [SIC]
MA: Yes [SIC]
BL: SA support mall activities..... [SIC]

Apparently the responses given by HOB were positive as almost all SAs were supporting the planned prospecting activities. However, there were reasons given for SAs' failure to join the planned sales prospecting activities, such as, preferred mall display not cold calls and clashed with their appointments with customers.

The final question was set to evaluate the participants' understanding of the current or existing lead management system provided by the company.

*Question No. 9: Do you monitor and guide SA in using Lead Management System?
If no, why?*
KA: No...haha... don't know how to say..... [SIC]
KW: No. I got inform SA..... [SIC]
KC: No, honestly, cause their lead is very poor..... [SIC]
SW: No leading but do reminding..... [SIC]
MA: No. Some no uses lead management fully..... [SIC]

It was evident from participants' responses that they themselves were not committed to the lead management system. Apparently there was a lack of understanding on the system as provided. To the participants, the lead management system is part of the company invoicing process.

4.2.7 Structured Interviews with SAs

In order to validate and triangulate the data gathered from HOBs as suggested in Chapter Three item 3.5.7, sixty two SAs of the five branches were interviewed with nine similar questions used for the HOBs during their interviews. The interviews were conducted from 21/3/2012 to 3/4/2012. The purpose of interviewing SAs was to gauge SAs' understanding of lead management and also their expectation of supports given by HOBs in implementing lead management activities. The findings and feedbacks from the SAs of the five branches were as follows (Figure 4.2):

Figure 4.2

SAs' Feedback on Daily Prospects

<i>Question: How do you go about getting your prospects (for sales) every day?</i>					
	<i>Branch (with total number of SA's opinions)</i>				
	<i>Stutong 24 SAs</i>	<i>Satok 13 SAs</i>	<i>Sibu 10 SAs</i>	<i>Miri 14 SAs</i>	<i>Bintulu 8 SAs</i>
<i>Friends/Relatives</i>	7	4	6	4	8
<i>Talk to people</i>	13	1	2	1	1
<i>Old Customers</i>	3	3	3	3	
<i>Showroom</i>	3		4		3
<i>Canvassing</i>	10	9	5	1	4
<i>Road show</i>	7	8	3	3	3
<i>Broker/spotter</i>	1	3	3	1	3
<i>Shops/offices</i>	8	2	2	4	7

The feedbacks given by SAs from all the five branches were similar as they were fully aware of where they could generate or find leads and contacts. However, their emphasis and preferences were different as these SAs do not have the same strengths. Furthermore, SAs always opted for easy and convenient method, especially getting leads from friends, old customers, and road shows.

As planned sales prospecting activities required a group of SAs to jointly organize the event, therefore the second question was set to evaluate SAs' commitment towards the group events (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3

SAs' Feedback on Group Prospecting Activities

Question: Do you believe in doing prospecting activities in a group? Why?

<i>Branch</i>	<i>No. of Responses from SA</i>	<i>Reasons</i>
<i>Stutong</i>	<i>15 SA said Yes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>it's a way to find prospect</i> • <i>it gives motivation</i> • <i>without doing, we will achieve nothing [SIC]</i> • <i>there are opportunity to get sales (in mandarin)</i>
<i>Satok</i>	<i>5 SA said 50:50</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>because can learn from the senior SAs</i> • <i>doing it on your own is better</i>
	<i>8 SA said Yes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>more fun and easy to negotiate</i> • <i>kalau banyak people feel enjoy [SIC]</i> • <i>can get help when doing in group more display vehicles available</i>
<i>Sibu</i>	<i>1 SA said No</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I like to do alone [SIC]</i>
	<i>4 SA said 50:50</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Road show only</i> • <i>Sometimes too rush (in mandarin)</i>
	<i>6 SA said Yes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Can get prospect (in mandarin)</i> • <i>Teamwork [SIC]</i> • <i>Have to do [SIC in mandarin]</i>
<i>Bintulu</i>	<i>4 SA said 50:50</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Customers don't buy in road show</i> • <i>More people more conflicts</i>
	<i>4 SA said Yes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It gives confidence (in BM)</i> • <i>Can get guidance from senior SA</i>
<i>Miri</i>	<i>1 SA said 50:50</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Don't get any prospect there</i>
	<i>7 SA said Yes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Easier to attack crowds (in mandarin)</i> • <i>Alone cannot do many things (in mandarin)</i>

The responses from majority of SAs of the five branches (Figure 4.4) were positive as they agreed to participate in the group prospecting activities. Reasons given were rather similar among the branches. However, some SAs were sceptical towards group

prospecting activities as they feared undercutting of vehicle prices by giving higher discounting.

Figure 4.4

Responses on Participating in Group Prospecting Activities

Branch	Total SA	SA agreed (Yes)	Similar comments and reasons
Stutong	24	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>it gives motivation</i> • <i>can get support when one person can't make it</i> • <i>as it gives confident to one another (in BM)</i>
Satok	13	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>can get help when doing in group(in mandarin)</i> • <i>can learn from one another</i>
Sibu	10	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Teamwork [SIC]</i>
Bintulu	8	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It gives confidence (in BM)</i> • <i>Can get guidance from senior SA</i>
Miri	14	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It gives confident to one another</i> • <i>Teamwork</i>

The subsequent question was a follow up of the earlier question in order to gauge their total commitments of group events (Figure 4.5 and 4.6).

Figure 4.5

SAs' Feedback on Joining Planned Prospecting Activities

Reasons (No. of SAs' Responses)				
	<i>Stutong</i>		<i>Satok</i>	
100%	10	* <i>lack of confidence</i> * <i>instructed to go</i>	5	* <i>got appointment</i> * <i>Sales opportunity</i> * <i>Planned by boss</i>
80%	2	* <i>see own customers</i>	1	* <i>Want sales</i>
70%	2	* <i>sometimes not free</i>	2	* <i>Pprefer alone [SIC]</i>
50%	7	* <i>own plan</i> * <i>join road show</i> * <i>when I am free</i>	5	* <i>can't do it alone</i> * <i>already planned [SIC]</i> * <i>to motivate new SA</i>

Figure 4.6

SAs' Feedback on Joining Planned Prospecting Activities

<i>Reasons (No. of SAs' Responses)</i>						
	<i>Sibu</i>		<i>Miri</i>		<i>Bintulu</i>	
100%	10	*To look for prospect *Planned by boss *Compulsory *Want sales want money *Opportunity to get good prospect [SIC] *It's our responsibility	14	*opportunity to get sales *I need to do extra sales *Except delivering car *arranged by the boss *meet up with customers *Get sales & prospects	7	*Boss request *he is the boss *To get prospects *Can get many sales
50%	1	* depends on places planned				

Based on the responses of SAs from Stutong and Satok, many reasons were given for not being able to join one hundred percent of the planned prospecting activities (Figure 4.7). It was exciting to note that one hundred percent of Sibul and Miri SAs have committed full participation of the planned sales activities. Almost all Bintulu SAs, 7 SAs out of 8, gave full support to the planned sales activities.

Figure 4.7

Reasons for Not Joining Planned Prospecting Activities

<i>Reasons</i>					
Total	<100%	Stutong	Total SAs	<100%	Satok
24 SAs	14 SAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • see own customers • I am free, I will follow • Only join road show • my own appointment • have my own schedules • to followown plan 	13SAs	8SAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I prefer alone [SIC] • Because we can't do it alone all the time [SIC] • Because already planned [SIC]
Total	<100%	Bintulu	Sibu & Miri		
8 SAs	1 SA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It depends on places planned 	10SAs	NIL	
			14 SAs	NIL	

However, when compared the above feedbacks with the reply given by HOBs during their interview under Question Six, “*Did all your SAs join the planned prospecting activities?*” The replies from Stutong SAs were consistent with the comments made by KA that SAs have their own appointment. However, the response given by KC during the interview was different as eight of his SAs were not supporting all the planned sales prospecting activities. Replies from SW and MA were consistent with Sibiu and Miri SAs’ responses as all their SAs were supporting and participated in all the prospecting activities.

The following question was developed to gauge SAs’ understanding on the benefits of prospecting activities as there were many new SAs in the branches (Figure 4.8).

Figure 4.8

Feedbacks on the Benefits of Prospecting Activities

Question: Do you find the prospecting activities helpful in getting prospects and leads? Why?						
Responses	Stutong	Sibu	Satok			
<i>Yes</i>	19	<i>Can get customers Can get prospect Need to follow up To motivate and Can get sales</i>	9	<i>Can get prospects More walk-in More salesy to promote self</i>	13	<i>get prospects [SIC] get contact [SIC] sales achievement meeting a lot of people and get contact [SIC] easy to deal (in BM)</i>
<i>Sometimes</i>	4	<i>Depends on venue Have signed deal there</i>	1	<i>Not all sales come from road show</i>		
<i>No</i>	1	<i>Never signed deal yet</i>				
Responses	Bintulu	Miri				
<i>Yes</i>	6	<i>Will have prospect] Don't always depend on broker Sales achievement</i>	13	<i>More sales opportunity Can get contact Will get sales [Training and guiding new and young SA</i>		
<i>No</i>	2	<i>cannot get sales Wasting time</i>		<i>Don't get new contact all the time (in mandarin)</i>		

The responses and feedbacks from SAs were positive as almost all the SAs understood and knew the benefits of joining or participating in prospecting activities. One or two SAs from Stutong, Sibü, Bintulu and Miri were having some misconception of the purpose and objective of sales prospecting activities as they expect to get instant results by signing deals on the spot from these activities.

The next question was set up to understand and evaluate the level of SAs' expectation from their superior (Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9

Level of SAs' Expectation from Superior

<i>Question: Do you agree that your superior must plan for your daily prospecting activities?</i>			
Branch	Responses from SA		Remarks
Stutong	Yes	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we can't say no when your boss plan for the activities • Of course, must follow the boss' plans • Ok so long as he can spare his time to plan • as canvassing is important
	Sometimes	5	
	No	6	
Satok	Yes	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only road show as we need time to see own customers • Boss can plan, but you must have your own plan too • because we have our own things to do • Not every day as we have our own plan • Need superior to plan • Must have good sales results • Plan and then discuss, but don't force it down • Prefer to get guidance from superior • Not daily plan • I don't agree [SIC]
	Sometimes	4	
	No	1	
Sibü	Yes	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are adult and know what is good [SIC] • Not daily plan
	No	4	
	Sometimes	1	
Bintulu	Yes	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need superior to plan • Must have good sales results • Plan and then discuss, but don't force it down
	No	5	
Satok	Yes	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need superior to plan • Must have good sales results • Plan and then discuss, but don't force it down • Timing is important • Not daily plan, and prefer weekly plan • Got other things to do
	Sometimes	4	
Miri	Yes	4	
	Sometimes	4	

The results and feedbacks from the above were rather surprising as almost half of the SAs from Stutong, Satok and Sibü and, more than half of Bintulu and Miri SAs have expressed negatively and commented that they do not need HOBs to plan for them (Figure 4.10).

Figure 4.10
Feedback from SAs on HOBs' Planned Prospecting Activities

Branch	Total SA	SA responded 'No' & 'sometimes'	Similar comments and reasons
Stutong	24	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Only road show as we need time to see own customers (in BM)</i> • <i>Boss can plan, but you must have your own plan too [SIC]</i> • <i>because we have our own things to do</i> • <i>Not every day as we have our own plan</i> • <i>lack opportunity to close sales in canvassing (in mandarin)</i>
Satok	13	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>You need to plan your own (in mandarin)</i> • <i>Not daily plan</i> • <i>Plan for road show only</i>
Sibü	10	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We are adult and know what is good [SIC]</i> • <i>Not daily plan</i>
Bintulu	8	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Miri	14	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Don't need spoon feeding [SIC in mandarin]</i> • <i>Can't depend on superior</i> • <i>Not daily plan, and prefer weekly plan</i> • <i>Got other things to do [SIC]</i> • <i>Prefer own plan</i>

The statement or phrases used were quite similar among the branches as SAs expressed that they preferred to do their own daily sales prospecting activities. However, the sales results of the branches were far below expectation as SAs were left to do their own sales activities for far too long, Hence it is vital for the HOBs to plan for more sales prospecting activities.

The subsequent question set was to check whether SAs were fully aware of the planned sales prospecting activities in their respective branches. The responses were interesting and the answers from SAs varied so much within their own branch (Figure 4.11).

Figure 4.11
Responses from SAs on the Awareness of Planned Activities

	<i>Branch</i>				
	<i>Stutong</i> 24 SAs	<i>Satok</i> 13 SAs	<i>Sibu</i> 10 SAs	<i>Miri</i> 14 SAs	<i>Bintulu</i> 8 SAs
<i>Everyday</i>	1	1	1		
<i>Many</i>	1				
<i>A lot</i>	2				
<i>Every week</i>	1	1		1	
<i>25 times</i>	1				
<i>10 times</i>	4	1			
<i>5 or 6 times per week</i>	1		2		1
<i>2 to 6 times per week</i>	1	1	5		
<i>2 to 4 times per week</i>	1	4		5	
<i>2 to 3 times per week</i>	2	1	1	6	2
<i>1 to 2 times per week</i>	2	2		2	1
<i>Not sure</i>	6	3	1		4

Apparently the SAs were not very sure of the actual planning within their own branches. Hence, they were guessing and gave different replies, as above.

The final three questions were developed to evaluate SAs' confidence, trust and respect towards their respective HOBs (Figure 4.12, 4.13 and 4.14).

Figure 4.12

SAs' on HOBs Creativity in Planning

Question: Is your superior creative and knowledgeable in planning the prospecting activities?

	Branch				
	<i>(with total number of SA's opinions)</i>				
	Stutong 24 SAs	Satok 13 SAs	Sibu 10 SAs	Miri 14 SAs	Bintulu 8 SAs
Yes	16	9	6	11	1
Okay only	6	3	4	3	1
No	1				4
Not sure	1	1			2

Almost all, except six Bintulu SAs viewed that their HOBs were creative and know how to plan the sales prospecting activities. As reported under participant profile, BL was having great difficulty in taking command of his team. Hence, a great majority of the senior SAs do not respect his leadership. The responses received from the four SAs were not surprising.

Figure 4.13

HOBs' Feedback on SAs' Participation in Planned Activities

Question: Is your superior concerned whether you follow his planned prospecting activities?

Branch	No. of Responses from SA		Remarks
Stutong	Yes	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need to send pictures to show as evidence • as he always on our back (in mandarin) • He will ask whether we have done it or not
	Sometimes	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's flexible [SIC}
	Don't know	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Satok	Yes	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The boss will monitor closely • He wants us to submit reports • Sales results is the main concern (in mandarin) • He would be angry if you don't follow his plan
	Sometimes	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ikut kami punya plan 'tidak' [SIC] • Not every activity
Sibu	Yes	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So far so good
Bintulu	Yes	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The boss is concern about his reporting to HQ)
	No	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Miri	Yes	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The boss will follow up
	Sometimes	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

The responses from almost all of the SAs, except, one each from Stutong and Bintulu, have recognized the HOBs' effort in monitoring and following-up on the sales prospecting activities.

Figure 4.14

SAs' Feedback on HOBs' Participation in Planned Activities

<i>Question: Did your superior join the planned prospecting activities?</i>			
Branch	No. of Responses from SA		Remarks
<i>Stutong</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>16</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Most of the time is Yes (in mandarin)</i> •
	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>2</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Only road show</i> • <i>Some big scale road show only (in mandarin)</i> • <i>but on a big road show only</i>
	<i>90% only</i>	<i>1</i>	
<i>Satok</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>5</i>	
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>8</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>spot check</i> • <i>usually come in the morning</i> • <i>he needs to take care of the SA [SIC]</i>
	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>5</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Only in weekends</i>
<i>Sibu</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>8</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>He will spot check</i>
	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>2</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>unless the branch is having meeting</i>
<i>Bintulu</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>4</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Only those planned by the boss</i>
	<i>No</i>	<i>1</i>	
<i>Miri</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>3</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Whenever he is free</i>
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>9</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Doing spot check only</i>
	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>5</i>	

The above responses indicated that majority of SAs were fully aware that their HOBs have participated in the prospecting activities. Reasons and understanding of HOBs' participation were personal as HOBs have never indicated or spell out to SAs as to why they were there in the prospecting activities.

These responses were consistent with HOBs' reply under Question Seven of interview conducted for them (reproduced Figure 4.15).

Figure 4.15

HOBs' Participation in Prospecting Activities

Question No. 7: How often do you join the prospecting activities in a month?

HOBs Responses			
KC	<i>8 out of 10 activities</i>	KA	<i>4 to 5 times, around once a week</i>
SW & MA	<i>All</i>	BL	<i>Join no, but monitor {SIC}</i>

In actual fact, HOBs should have put in greater effort in joining all the sales prospecting activities as these initiatives require considerable involvement of HOBs and SAs. Furthermore, it is great opportunity for them to build and maintain better working relationship through these sales activities.

4.2.8 Participant Observation

Sales achievement by all branches is always the main concern of everyone in the frontline! More so for the researcher as the head of Sarawak region, he is entrusted to ensure the branches achieving not only the current year, but also the longer term sales target, such as MTP by 2016.

As discussed in Chapter Three (item 3.5.2.3 and 3.5.2.4), regular dialog serves as a communication process to enhance interrelationship and also being used as a process (tool) to develop a climate of collaboration through listening and talking to the employees. While making the regular branch visits, the researcher has reminded and

emphasized the needs of preparing daily sales prospecting plans by all participants.

Followings were the reminders given to the participants (Figure 4.16):

Figure 4.16

Researcher's Reminder to HOBs

Branch	Reminders	Observation Notes dated
<i>Sibu</i>	<i>Called SW and told him to prepare sales plan for the branch</i>	<i>20/2/2012</i>
<i>Miri</i>	<i>Highlighting the need to do more sales activities and get more contacts daily in the branch meeting with SA. MA acknowledged and agreed to plan.</i>	<i>21/2/2012</i>
<i>Stutong</i>	<i>Discussed with KA on prospecting activities plan for the branch</i>	<i>24/2/2012</i>
<i>Sibu</i>	<i>Explaining the importance of lead management system and the needs of having daily sales activities in the branch meeting with SA</i>	<i>1/3/2012</i>
<i>Satok</i>	<i>Branch meeting with SA: explained the benefits of doing more lead management activities</i>	<i>5/3/2012</i>
<i>Stutong</i>	<i>Emphasized the importance of doing lead management activities and explained the benefits and purposes to all SA present.</i>	<i>6/3/2012</i>
<i>Stutong</i>	<i>Joined RB's training session with new SAs and explained on the needs of doing sales prospecting activities daily.</i>	<i>12/3/2012</i>
<i>Stutong</i>	<i>Joined branch meeting with RL. And RL reminded all present to look for more leads by doing sales prospecting activities.</i>	<i>2/4/2012</i>
<i>Miri</i>	<i>MA was advised and reminded to on doing daily sales plan for the SA in the branch meeting</i>	<i>14/4/2012</i>
<i>Stutong</i>	<i>RL reminded SA and HOB on the importance of doing daily prospecting activities plan.</i>	<i>16/4/2012</i>
<i>Sibu</i>	<i>SAs were reminded in the meeting that daily sales prospecting activities are important as it helps to generate more leads and prospects.</i>	<i>15/5/2012</i>

Participants' failures to plan for daily sales activities have resulted in seeing many SAs lingering in the showroom. They would either sit around watching TV, chatting,

reading newspapers in the office. The following details were findings of researcher's observation notes during his branch visits (Figure 4.17):

Figure 4.17
Summary of Researcher's Observation Notes

<i>Branch</i>	<i>Findings</i>	<i>Observation Notes dated</i>
<i>Stutong</i>	<i>SA: 2 on showroom duty, 3 watching TV and 2 reading newspaper</i>	<i>2/3/2012</i>
<i>Satok</i>	<i>SA: 1 on showroom duty, 2 reading newspaper</i>	<i>3/3/2012</i>
<i>Bintulu</i>	<i>SA: 1 on showroom duty, 1 doing delivery, 1 preparing documents and 2 watching TV.</i>	<i>25/3/2012</i>
<i>Stutong</i>	<i>Patrick, NK, Joseph and Dennis were chit-chatting. Peter is on showroom duty.</i>	<i>4/4/2012</i>
<i>Stutong</i>	<i>1 SA is on duty, 1 doing delivery, 2 watching TV and 1 sitting in a room.</i>	<i>5/4/2012</i>
<i>Stutong</i>	<i>2 SAs on showroom duty, 4 SAs doing nothing</i>	<i>7/4/2012</i>
<i>Satok</i>	<i>SA: 2 on showroom duty, 2 watching TV and 1 reading newspaper</i>	<i>10/4/2012</i>
<i>Sibu</i>	<i>SA: 1 on showroom duty, 3 chit-chatting in next door coffee shop and one of them subsequently came back to showroom and played with his Ipad game.</i>	<i>12/4/2012</i>
<i>Bintulu</i>	<i>SA: 2 on showroom duty, 1 doing delivery and 2 chit-chatting</i>	<i>13/4/2012</i>
<i>Satok</i>	<i>SA: 2 on showroom duty and 2 watching TV</i>	<i>16/4/2012</i>
<i>Stutong</i>	<i>SA: 2 on showroom duty, 2 next door coffee shop chit-chatting and 3 doing nothing in showroom</i>	<i>28/4/2012</i>
<i>Stutong</i>	<i>SA: 2 on showroom duty and 3 chit-chatting and watching TV</i>	<i>1/5/2012</i>
<i>Satok</i>	<i>SA: 2 on showroom duty, 1 doing delivery 2 watching TV and 1 reading newspaper</i>	<i>2/5/2012</i>
<i>Stutong</i>	<i>SA: 1 on showroom duty, 2 in admin room chit-chatting, 3 watching TV and 1 doing delivery</i>	<i>4/5/2012</i>
<i>Stutong</i>	<i>SA: 1 on showroom duty and 4 watching TV</i>	<i>5/5/2012</i>

However, KC defended his sales team by indicating that his SAs have their own weekly sales action plan. Upon checking with his SAs, they were mainly focusing on their appointment with customers for the day. The said weekly sales plan has no details and goal. Furthermore, HOBs have not been monitoring SAs' performances and records on the prospects lists. These were common in all the branches as evident

in the responses of HOBs' own during interview and also the findings of RB and RY's reports. Researcher's branch visits have further confirmed and found that HOBs have failed to guide the SAs in monitoring their own performances (Figure 4.18).

Figure 4.18

HOBs' Feedback on Monitoring SAs' Performance

HOB	Comments and remarks	ObservationNotes
<i>BL</i>	<i>No prospects list sighted in the branch</i>	<i>25/3/2012</i>
<i>SW</i>	<i>Prospects sheet not submitted by SA</i>	<i>12/4/2012</i>
<i>MA</i>	<i>HOB is yet to announce to SA</i>	<i>14/4/2012</i>
<i>KA</i>	<i>so far no one has submitted the prospect list to the branch yet.</i>	<i>16/4/2012</i>
<i>KC</i>	<i>No prospect list submitted by SA</i>	<i>18/4/2012</i>
<i>MA</i>	<i>Yet to follow up with Sa on prospect list submission</i>	<i>7/5/2012</i>
<i>SW</i>	<i>Reviewed hot prospects in daily meeting, but no names given</i>	<i>15/5/2012</i>
<i>BL</i>	<i>Reviewed sales for the month and asked for hot prospects in hand</i>	<i>16/5/2012</i>

From the researcher's observations, similar issues and statements of prospects were used in every branch meeting, except that there was no proper record on those prospects generated. It was evident that HOBs were concerned and being hard pressed for the month end sales achievement. Hence, it was common to note that when they reviewed sales status, similar statements or phrases on hot prospects or prospects were used in every meeting. The followings were the observation remarks (Figure 4.19) taken by researcher when HOBs reviewed their sales activities with SAs. These findings were indications demonstrated by HOBs that they did not have proper and systematic way of evaluating each sales prospecting activity.

Figure 4.19
Feedback on HOBs' Evaluating Process

Branch	Remarks on Evaluation of Sales Prospecting Activities	Observation Notes dated
Stutong	<i>KW commented that the road show at Kuwait Finance branch was not good: no sales ...only few prospects [SIC]</i>	<i>1/5/2012</i>
Sibu	<i>SW reviewed with SA on last road show at Concourse (4/5 to 6/5) and reported it as good: closed 5 deals and 7 hot prospects [SIC]</i>	<i>15/5/2012</i>
Stutong	<i>KA reviewed auto road show at Giant Hypermarket: Reprimanded three SA for not turning up for duty, Big crowd, but no deal signed, except 150 to 200 prospects collected [SIC]</i>	<i>18/5/2012</i>
Satok	<i>KC reviewed road show at Kuching Sentral: it was good as 100 over prospects and 5 deals were signed [SIC]</i>	<i>20/5/2012</i>
Miri	<i>MA reported on the following road show: Bintang Plaza 3 Navara closed and 10 hot prospects collected Mayfest Trade Fair- Ya, quite good....100 over prospects Limbang – 1 Livina signed and 3 hot</i>	<i>29/5/2012</i>

Similar to question six of HOBs' interview, observation Notes dated 24/2, 25/3, 10/4, 1/5, 18/5 were statement made by HOBs during his branch visits. These were genuine concern showed by HOBs that some of their SAs would not participate in the planned sales prospecting activities (Figure 4.20).

Figure 4.20
HOBs' Feedback on SAs' Participation in Prospecting Activities

Branch	Comments	Observation Notes dated
Stutong	<i>KA feared that his senior SAs might not follow the plan</i>	<i>24/2/2012</i>
Bintulu	<i>BL mentioned that his SAs preferred mall display and not cold calls.</i>	<i>25/3/2012</i>
Satok	<i>SA preferred to spend time with spotters(introducer)</i>	<i>10/4/2012</i>
Stutong	<i>KW reported that some SAs were lazy</i>	<i>1/5/2012</i>
Stutong	<i>SAs did not turn up for the road shows @Giant Hypermarket</i>	<i>18/5/2012</i>

4.2.9 Archival Search

Data can be collected by using various internal documents, such as emails, field notes, reports and minutes of meetings. Hence, it enhances the triangulation process as reflected under methodological triangulation in Chapter Three (item 3.5.7.1). Therefore various documents were referred to, as follows:

HOBs' monthly Report

Based on the HOB's feedback on branch Monthly Reports, statements on issue relating sales achievement and prospects were mentioned as all HOBs were desperate to achieve their respective monthly sales targets (Figure 4.21, 4.22 and 4.23).

Figure 4.21

HOBs' March Report

<i>HOB</i>	<i>Critical Task</i>	<i>Issues/Problems</i>
<i>KC</i>	<i>Poor sales</i>	<i>SA don't have prospects [SIC]</i>
<i>SW</i>	<i>Sales</i>	<i>On their own there was no prospects [SIC]</i>
<i>MA</i>	<i>Weak prospect bank</i>	<i>SA are new[SIC]</i>

Figure 4.22

HOBs' April Report

<i>HOB</i>	<i>Critical Task</i>	<i>Issues/Problems</i>
<i>KA</i>	<i>SA selling below target</i>	<i>No prospects [SIC]</i>
<i>KC</i>	<i>Poor sales</i>	<i>Sa don't have prospects [SIC]</i>
<i>BL</i>	<i>Get more sales</i>	<i>Lack of prospects [SIC]</i>
<i>SW</i>	<i>Prospecting activities</i>	<i>so that SA can get prospects to close [SIC]</i>
<i>MA</i>	<i>Pushing for higher sales</i>	<i>New SA are weak and few senior Sa also lazy</i>

Figure 4.23
HOBs' May Report

<i>HOB</i>	<i>Critical Task</i>	<i>Issues/Problems</i>
<i>KA</i>	<i>SA selling below target</i>	<i>Lack of hot prospects [SIC]</i>
<i>KC</i>	<i>Poor sales</i>	<i>Lack of good or hot prospects bank [SIC]</i>
	<i>Prospecting activities</i>	<i>Didn't get much prospects [SIC]</i>
<i>BL</i>	<i>Increase booking</i>	<i>Not enough prospects to close [SIC]</i>
<i>MA</i>	<i>Increase sales</i>	<i>Probably lack in prospects bank [SIC]</i>

In addition, RB's evaluation reports dated 15th May 2012 have also highlighted similar issue and the feedbacks given by HOBs were as follows:

Question: Do you have a manual record of prospects/leads submitted by SA on a daily basis?

KA: No, they never submitted [SIC]

KC: Didn't ask yet. [SIC]

SW: I tried, but the old one always refused [SIC]

BL: Yes, they have very few names to give [SIC]

MA: So far never announce yet [SIC]

In the same evaluation report, RB has made the following remarks on the respective HOBs' behaviour:

KA was not committed to this new process and failed to monitor SA [SIC]

SW has no time to monitor the SA individually as he was too busy running about helping SA to close sales. [SIC]

BL tried his best, but lacking in prospecting activities as the leads generated were too low. [SIC]

Common and similar key words and phrases of statements used in the monthly reports were poor sales, weak prospect bank, sales prospecting activities, selling below target and increasing booking (Figure 4.24). These words clearly indicated

participants' understanding, emphasis and recognition of sales achievement as their main concern in the branch operation.

Figure 4.24
Common Words and Phrases used by HOBs

HOB	Statements or Phrases used		
	March Report	April Report	May Report
KA	<i>Nil</i>	<i>SA selling below target[SIC]</i>	<i>SA selling below target[SIC]</i>
KC	<i>Poor sales</i>	<i>Poor sales[SIC]</i>	<i>Poor sales[SIC]</i> <i>Prospecting activities[SIC]</i>
BL	<i>No sales[SIC]</i>	<i>Get more sales[SIC]</i>	<i>Increase booking[SIC]</i>
SW	<i>Sales[SIC]</i>	<i>Sales prospecting activities[SIC]</i>	<i>Sales[SIC]</i>
MA	<i>Weak prospect bank[SIC]</i>	<i>Pushing for higher sales[SIC]</i>	<i>Increase sales][SIC]</i>

Reports on usage of Lead Management Information System

As evident in the evaluation reports submitted by RY and RB, following were their comments with regards to how the branches were using the current lead management information system (Figure 4.25 and 4.26).

Figure 4.25
RY's reports

Dated	Comments/Remarks
<i>30/3/2012</i>	<i>Keying-in lead with husband's name, but vehicle was registered in wife's name. The earlier lead (husband) remains in the lead system</i>
<i>10/6/2012</i>	<i>difficult to retrieve certain prospects....[SIC]</i> <i>SA cannot trace their leads status[SIC]</i>

Figure 4.26

RB's reports

<i>Dated</i>	<i>Comments/Remarks</i>
<i>15/5/2012</i>	<i>system slow.....scared to use the computer.....[SIC]</i>
<i>20/5/2012 (Sibu branch)</i>	<i>SA commented that particular must be clear and not key-in repeatedly..... 67% of SAs are using the conventional diary method.....[SIC]</i>

In addition, HOBs' negative behaviours and attitudes towards the lead management information system have made it more difficult to see the success of utilising the information system provided. RB's evaluation report on 15th May 2012 stated the following comments (Figure 4.27):

Figure 4.27

HOBs' Comment on Lead Management Information System

<i>Date</i>	<i>Comments/Remarks</i>
<i>15/5/2012</i>	<i>KA admitted that he did not follow-up with SA on the keying in process....too busy doing other function and no time to check them. KC commented that he is paying attention to those young one ...those without car sales before..... SW did not emphasize much on this new process of keying in as he has no time to monitor. BL did monitor, but commented that the system is slow MA was only pushing 3 to 4 SA that was not performing well (poor sales) to key in....</i>

Furthermore, RY's overall comment in her June 10 evaluation report highlighted that HOB viewed that it is too time consuming to monitor and evaluate the input. She

added that during the first three and a half months (20th Feb to 31st May), the approach of using the lead management information system by many SA was not encouraging as most of them don't understand the process and procedures of using it.

Minutes of Meetings

It was a disappointing scenario whereby HOBs have failed to carry out their fundamental task of managing and controlling the sales force. Despite reminders were given by HQ Top Management via email dated 11th Jan 2012, and highlighted in the 1st and 2nd Lead Management Meeting on 15th Feb 2012 and 15th March 2012 respectively, HOBs have failed to ensure their course of action in order to comply with the top management's adopted accountability measures. All participants recognised the importance of formal documentation of monitoring and evaluating as important aspects of accountability. Furthermore, their leadership styles have a misalignment between what was said and what was actually done. Apparently this misalignment was demonstrated in the form of deception and avoidance in their behaviours.

E-mail Reminder from HQ

HQ top management has reminded the branch HOBs to monitor SAs' performance and daily activity closely through the email dated 11 Jan. 2012.

Message from HQ Top Management

"As per instruction from the last visit of our Executive Director (ED) on the branches to constantly monitor and track the sales of the SA, ED has insisted that every SA to be asked to open a folder. This is a sale prospecting folder whereby the SA daily prospects are to be reviewed on a daily basis by HOB."[SIC]

The simple message from this email has clearly indicated that in order to ensure success in sales achievements, HOBs have no other means, except to plan strategically, execute plan and programs, monitor, control and evaluate SAs' performances regularly.

4.2.10 Sales Advisors (SAs) Survey Results

It was suggested in Chapter Three (3.5.7.1) under methodological triangulation, survey could be used on subordinates. As such, survey was conducted on the SAs in order to assess the level of support provided by the HOBs. This section provided analyses of results relating to branch management outcomes and leadership support as perceived by SAs. The analyses were reviewed through survey questionnaires distributed to all sixty six SAs, namely Bintulu (8SAs), Miri (14 SAs), Sibuloh (9 SAs), Stutong (24 SAs), and Satok (11 SAs) on 20/4/2012, 23/4/2012, 25/4/2012, 18/5/2012 and 21/5/2012 respectively. However due to some prior appointments with customers, four of Stutong SAs were not able to complete and submit the survey questionnaires. However, as the five branches involved were having different set up, the number of SAs varied from one another and HOBs behaviours and characteristics were different. The survey findings were interpreted separately in order to gauge SA's expectation and understanding of HOBs. The results of overall mean scores were presented in Appendix 4.9 and Appendix 4.10 outlined the Profile of Respondents.

As shown in Appendix 4.9, the results of SAs' overall understanding and perception of their respective HOBs were positive as the mean score were positive with 4.1 for Sarawak Region. Apparently, the results of SAs Structured Interview and HOBs Traits mean scores are having similar pattern (Appendix 4.11). On the basis of this SAs survey finding, the evaluation results have triangulated and validated the data of HOBs traits collected earlier.

Both KC and MA are having the highest mean scores and BL receives the lowest mean score from both the results. Based on the SA survey results (Appendix 4.9), SAs from Satok and Miri branch have high confidence with KC's and MA's leadership and capabilities. They are happy and satisfied with the supports given to them. Based on the results (Appendix 4.12a, 4.12b and 4.12c), following are some examples of strong positive mean scores for KC's and MA's leadership (Appendix 4.13):

The strong positive results for KC and MA could be due to the Profiles of Respondents (Appendix 4.10) where 91 percent and 86 percent of Satok and Miri SAs are less than 40 years old. Majority of SAs are less than 2 years old (Satok 100 percent and Miri 71 percent). Hence, the demand and expectation of these SAs might have impacted the results.

In reality, KA is having a greater challenge in the branch. The branch is having a much more complex group of SA, ranging from the youngest of 21 years old to the oldest of 64 years old. In addition, thirty three percent of the branch's SAs were less than one year old. Hence, the overall confidence level of the SAs towards KA was not encouraging as the mean score was the second lowest with 3.9 in the region (Appendix 4.9). However, the results have indicated that SAs recognise KA's leadership capabilities and trust his leadership with strong positive mean score of 4.1. It was surprising that KA's planning skill was rated 4.0, much lower than the scores of KC, SW and MA as in researcher's opinion KA's planning strength is considered to be the strongest among the HOBs. In Sibuluhung, majority (seven out of nine SAs) of SAs were above forty years old (Appendix 10). As compared to other four branches, there was zero or nil SA less than one year old in the branch. Therefore it was a great challenge for SW to take command of the old guards as he was newly assigned as acting HOB in Sibuluhung branch. However, the positive responses received were a good sign that these experienced SAs have acknowledged SW's capabilities, strengths and having confidence in his leadership (Appendix 4.9). The overall responses from Bintulu SAs (Appendix 4.9) were totally different from the other branches SAs. Majority of Bintulu SAs perceived BL's leadership as moderate as BL's overall average mean scores were the lowest among the HOBs. Worst of all, thirty five percents (26 out of 74) of survey items were rated below the average mean scores of 3 (Appendix 4.12a, 4.12b and 4.12c). As reflected under HOB profile that BL is considered the weakest among the five HOBs. Based on these responses, BL appeared to have an uphill task of leading the branch sales force in implementing lead management as SAs were not having full confidence in his leadership.

4.2.11 Construction of Themes and Corresponding Categories

As outlined in Chapter Three under research design and triangulation process, the responses collected from various sources, namely interviews, participant observations, dialogs, and survey provided valuable information to identify themes. As the responses were short phrases or words that constitutes meanings or common intent were aggregated into themes.

The survey results were summarised and clustered into homogeneous categories. Nine categories emerged from the three hundreds sub-categories of items collected (Appendix 4.14, 4.15, 4.16, 4.17, 4.18, 4.19, 4.20 and 4.21). The results reflected in these appendixes have strengthened the triangulation process and validated the data. Three themes that reflected a higher level of understanding emerged from the nine categories aggregated. All participants' descriptions and expressions of their main concern in the branch included references to sales achievement. Words and phrases used had indicated participants' emphasis on the importance of achieving their respective sales targets as critical tasks that they have to fulfil. As such, HOBs are required to focus on the process of formulating strategic planning for the branch operation. They are required to align sales plans to achieved organizational goals. Strategic sales planning includes the coordination of desired goals and activities of the branch. Hence, sales planning is considered to be key factor in ensuring success implementation of lead management as sales planning is concerned with setting the desired goal for the branch and at the same time managing the sales activities of the branch so as to ensure However, as leaders of branch, HOBs need to influence and

motivate SAs in the branch and to implement the strategies to achieve organizational goals. As such, greater ability is needed from HOBs to motivate and bring the best out in SAs.

Hence, the first theme of **achievement alignment** represented a defining characteristic of HOBs in leading the branch in sales planning and setting clear direction and goals for the SAs. To ensure success, HOBs are required to motivate SAs to strive for better performance. Sales planning, goal setting and motivating are vital in supporting the branch to achieve the desired goals. The theme of achievement alignment was qualified by three categories of **sales planning, goal setting and motivating**, which covered one hundred and twenty sub-categories (Figure 4.28) collected from the various sources.

Figure 4.28
Theme of Achievement Alignment

Theme	Category	Sub-categories	Source of Information
Achievement Alignment	Sales Planning	46 items	HOB Interview (5items), SA Interview (22 items), Archival Search (8 items), Observation Notes (4 items) and SA Survey (7 items)
	Goal Setting	44 items	HOB Interview (4 items), SA Interview (21 items), Archival search (9 items), Observation Notes (4 items) and SA Survey (6 items)
	Motivating	30 items	HOB Interview (5 items), SA Interview (15 items), Observation Notes (3 items) and SA Survey (7 items)

These three categories of sales planning, goal setting, and motivating which qualified the theme achievement alignment were solicited from data and information collected from participants and SAs whether their leadership behaviours gear towards setting goals, developing lead management activity plans, motivating and ensuring the sales force to perform in order to achieve the goal set.

The subsequent theme of **leadership integrity** was qualified by three categories, which covered **trustworthiness, supportive and developing** (Figure 4.29). **Trustworthiness** values stress the leadership commitment to excellence. Hence, transparency as opposed to concealment in behaviors is recognized as important in the development of relationship built on trust. If the sales leaders were not able to demonstrate a high degree of credibility and trustworthiness, it would be difficult for the leaders to develop relationships with the SAs. Without strong relationship, naturally the sales leaders would find it difficult to influence the SAs in discharging their duties. **Supportive** values communicate how sales people are to be treated and cared for. Team members are required to work together as collaboration is necessary if the team wants to be successful. Collaboration is a long-term cooperation and coordination of efforts in order to achieve common goals. Effective HOBs are required to be in contact and be visible to the SAs whenever possible. The essential repertoire of effective HOBs is how they spend their time with the sales team. HOBs should be consciously on the lookout for ways to establish themselves in supporting the SAs. **Developing** values see the potential in others in order to ensure greater success in achieving sales in the long run. Sales people are most effective and

productive when sales managers provide adequate coaching and training to them. SAs are to be equipped with sound product knowledge, and selling skill in order to be more effective and efficient in doing sales. Coaching is a day to day interaction between leaders and followers in pursuing the common goals derived by constantly having dialogue with subordinates.

The theme of **leadership integrity** was qualified by three categories, which covered **trustworthiness, supportive and developing** which derived from a total of one hundred and seven sub-categories (Figure 4.29).

Figure 4.29
Theme of Leadership Integrity

Theme	Category	No. of Sub-categories	Source of Information
Leadership Integrity	Trustworthiness	42 items	HOB Interview (2 items), SA Interview (15 items), Archival Search (4 items), Observation Notes (4 items) and SA Survey (17 items)
	Supportive	29 items	HOB Interview (2 items), SA Interview (5 items), Archival Search (4 items), Observation Notes (5 items) and SA Survey (13 items)
	Developing	36 items	HOB Interview (5 items), SA Interview (5 items), Archival Search (4 items), Observation Notes (9 items) and SA Survey (13 items)

The third and final theme, **governance** focused on mechanisms of standard operating procedures and processes associated with systems of governance. It covers policies, operating procedures and processes applicable to the managing of lead management

of the five branches. Sales management control has great impact on sales people performance and organization effectiveness.

Management control is a process of ensuring sales force are properly **monitored**, **evaluated** and **control** so that SAs are challenged and enhanced their performance. Sales people need proper guidance in performing their sales. HOBs are responsible for all shortcomings of sales performance as they are in the position to evaluate, identify and monitor the sales trends. HOBs leadership activities in **monitoring** the SAs can have great impact on their performance as HOBs need to know and understand the plan and progress of SAs' activities. HOBs' effective use of their leadership strengths can help to enhance and influence SAs' performance by monitoring the SAs consistently. With close monitoring, HOBs can evaluate how well SAs have performed against the targets committed. Behaviour-controls system to ensure sales activity; operating procedures and rules are successfully implemented as it is important for sales managers to **evaluate** sales people as the actions could impact sales people' productivity and thus the organization's long term success.

In principle, sales force **control** systems are managerial procedures that could influence sales people behavior and enhance their performance. Sales people's performance is an evaluation of the sales people's behavioral performance and outcome performance. Behavioral performance includes sales planning and prospecting activities. On the other hand, outcome performance refers to sales results,

market share and customer satisfaction. Score-monitoring tools or proper records of sales performance are critical to know how sales people are performing. That outcome-based control will have lesser positive impact on sales people’s long term performance as compared to behavioral-based control which emphasizes on enhancing sales people’s capability and positive job attitudes. HOBs’ control competency is not just how much control is exercised by them, rather, how well it is being done. These three categories derived from data of the seventy three sub-categories (Figure 4.30) collected from the various sources.

Figure 4.30
Theme of Governance

Theme	Category	No. of Sub-categories	Source of Information
Governance	Monitoring	26 items	HOB Interview (6 items), SA Interview (3 items), Archival Search (11 items), Observation Notes (4 items) and SA Survey (2 items)
	Evaluating	26 items	HOB Interview (2 items), SA Interview (8 items), Archival Search (4 items), Observation Notes (7 items) and SA Survey (5 items)
	Control	21 items	HOB Interviews (1 items), SA Interviews (6 items), Archival Search (5 items), Observation Notes (7 items) and SA Survey (2 items)

4.2.12 Reflection for First Cycle

In the content analysis process, distinct concept derived from words, phrases or statements would be divided into sub-groups and subsequently developing themes for the findings. Figure 4.31 below presented the summary of the themes and the corresponding categories that were derived from fieldwork conducted in the First

Cycle. The results emerged with three themes and nine corresponding categories represented by three hundreds sub-categories derived from HOB Interview, SA Interview, Archival Search, Observation Notes and SA Survey.

Figure 4.31
Summary of Themes

Themes	Categories
Achievement Alignment (120 items)	Sales Planning (46 items)
	Goal Setting (44 items)
	Motivating (30 items)
Leadership Integrity (107 items)	Trustworthiness (42 items)
	Supportive (29 items)
	Developing (36 items)
Governance (73 uitems)	Monitoring (26 items)
	Evaluating (26 items)
	Control (21 items)

The findings indicated that **achievement alignment** was the dominant theme with a total 120 items of sub-categories. Sales achievement was the primary and main focus of branch sales operation. The strategic sales plan required capable and effective leadership behaviours in influencing the sales force in achieving sales targets.

The sales leadership behaviour of HOBs was reflected in their personal value of high **integrity** in order to influence the SAs in implementing lead management in the branch. Integrity is vital in ensuring leadership effectiveness. Hence, the HOBs' behaviors must be consistently aligned with their words and actions in order to earn respect and trust from their SAs. HOBs who engaged in behaviors that did not reflect

strong value of integrity would not gain trust and support from sales people that they are leading.

To ensure success, performance of the sales force were to be controlled, monitored and evaluated accordingly. Hence, the theme **governance**, featured prominently in participants' expressions of values relating to the process of managing the sales team appropriately. Integrated into the theme of **governance** were participants' descriptions to the importance of relationships through which processes relating to management control took place. Effective sales leaders were not only committed to the compliance of proper processes but also to ensure performances were properly administered.

As outlined in Chapter One, the primary research questions for this action research were:

- a. Are the leaderships and sales management of HOB in ETCM effective in implementing lead management?
- b. What are the factors that influenced the implementation of lead management in ETCM?

4.2.13 Summary for First Cycle

The conclusion of First Cycle was summarized as follows:

First, it was evident that almost all of HOBs have failed to take charge of the sales team, especially in the areas of leading and directing the SAs. Apparently HOBs were not fully aware and concerned whether SAs participated in the planned sales activities. There was no evidence that they have spent time trying to convince SAs to get fully involved in the lead management activities. Generally, most of the HOBs have failed to participate in the activities. Evidences have shown that HOBs always went out (from showroom) and were very involved and focused on assisting SAs in the sales processes of negotiating and closing the deal. They were very interested and concerned in achieving the monthly targets.

In addition, there was no evidence that HOBs have spent valuable time to coach, guide and train SAs. All HOBs have failed to demonstrate their support to train the SAs as no priority was given to enhance SAs' competencies and skills. There was no sign and evidence of HOBs' commitment in strengthening SAs knowledge and selling skills as almost all their monthly feedback reports did not mention about training, coaching and mentoring programs, even though issues of poor sales were highlighted.

Apparently, leadership quality was another key issue affecting the successful implementation of lead management in the branches. Their leadership behaviours showed very little consideration as there was no personal coaching or training being conducted by HOBs themselves. HOBs should be mindful and take consideration as

they were leading a group of SAs with different levels of expertise, personalities and ethnic backgrounds. Most of them have failed to use positive influence in leading the sales team. Conversely, they behaved arrogantly and applying transactional approach to push for sales achievements. Based on researcher's personal observation, KA, KC and SW were very arrogant in leading the sales force. On the other hand, BL was very weak in leading the sales team.

HOBs chose not to use soft approach with SA when encountering problems and difficulties. HOBs always opted for the official authority bestowed to them and chose to give warning and even threatening dismissal of SAs who did not perform. BL seemed to be very timid and lack of confidence in leading his team. He is lacking in confidence especially in communicating in English. Among all the HOBs, only MA is considered a well balance leader as she is able to mingle with her sales force. Meetings were full of laughter and fun. She is a good motivator. HOBs have failed to demonstrate their leadership role to inspire hope in the sales team. Leadership is to develop human potential, able to inspire and enhance creativity of sales staff in supporting the branch in implementing lead management activities.

In addition, HOBs have failed to build and maintain relationships with SAs that develop long-term results rather than short-term outcomes. Furthermore, HOBs were too focused on the monthly sales target, which is a short-term outcome. The process to generate lead was generally overlooked.

In term of leadership styles, one HOB opted strongly for autocratic approach of demanding that the SA to deliver the required number of units, namely, to sell minimum of 4 units per month. SAs were being threatened to be dismissed if they cannot deliver the target. Another HOB would leave it entirely to the SAs to do what they wanted to as he lacks confidence in leading the SA.

Second, the focal research question goes to the issue of potential barriers that affect the effective implementation of lead management (Research Question No.2). Based on the results from interviews and observation conducted, the research findings indicated that all HOBs have failed to commit themselves in spending more time in managing and implementing lead management. The excuse given, such as, lack of time is a concern for the effective implementing of lead management activities. Generally, HOBs failed in monitoring SAs activities and performance regularly. HOBs are required to evaluate sales people's performance regularly in order to facilitate appropriate remedial action in order for SA to achieve better performance.

Participants' responses and answers given were rather similar, giving reasons such as no time, occasionally, does it randomly, not every day. The expressions and answers given were "no, they never submitted", "didn't ask yet", "tried, but always refused", "never announce yet" for the second question. As evidence from the interview, participants' recollection on their management attitudes and behaviours were lacking

as they have failed to demonstrate a commitment to fulfil their governance responsibilities.

The information gathered was in contradiction to the roles of sales manager to manage sales people's performance. Furthermore, managing means to supervise, monitor, guide, facilitate, evaluate and enforce sales prospecting activities for the benefit of the sales people and the branch were overlooked. Sales managers have better control over their sales activities as they have direct influence in generating sales.

Another issue relating to trust had to do with HOB's reports (relating to lead management activities) submission to the regional office. According to RY, no HOB has ever submitted the report on time. Repeated reminders were given and yet they have failed.

The findings indicated the need of positive role of behaviour-based sales management control strategy in improving the implementation of lead management activities. HOBs' monitoring role of behaviour-based sales management control is of great important in enhancing the effectiveness of sales operation. Furthermore, sales people frequently go to great lengths to hide what they are doing daily.

All five HOBs reacted differently to the same situation that they faced in their respective branches. One HOB would leave it to the SA to do what they like, so long as sales monthly targets were met. On the other hand, another two HOBs would choose few obedient SA to follow their plans. The management control practices differ across different HOBs.

Third, as highlighted by all HOBs, the current lead management information system is not user friendly. The subject matter was further confirmed by RB and RY in their respective reports dated 15th and 20th May, and 30th March 2012 that lead management information system needs improvement and enhancement by HQ IS Dept. However, that needs to be approved by Top Management in HQ. Nevertheless, HOBs are required to continuously and persistently monitor SA in using the system.

In conclusion, two questions relevant to this study emerged from these findings. Firstly, is transactional leader being the traits of HOBs concerned? If so, can Sarawak region benefit from transformational leadership? The findings showed all HOBs seemed to be focusing their routine on numbers churning and not focusing on developing, inspiring and motivating SA in implementing lead management which are the traits of transformational leadership style. SAs were left to do their own sales activities. This resulted in an uninspired group of sales force. Hence, the HOBs are ineffective in leading the sales force selling activities. Therefore, the next course of

action is to prepare the HOBs to transform their management style in leading the SAs.

Secondly, are the HOBs instigating and enabling behavioral change? The study reviewed that HOBs' uncommitted attitudes was one of the main factors that have affected the success of implementing lead management in the branches. Hence, as the study progress, the researcher continued to wrestle with this issue of uncommitted HOB. In addition, the findings based on frameworks developed from the review of the leadership, sales management, personal selling and the data collected were as follows:

- HOBs did not ensure that adequate planning and set clear direction for the branch and SAs
- Poor in coordinating, and providing infrastructure to support SA in implementing lead management activities.
- Lacking in the leadership activities by HOB with regards to monitoring of SA's activities and evaluating of their performance.
- HOBs were incompetent in providing training, coaching or even mentoring the SA.
- HOBs did not participate in SA's lead management activities

4.3 Second Cycle

As evident in the First Cycle findings, the main attribute that has impacted the successful implementation of lead management was the attitudes and behaviors of all the five HOBs. They were lacking in focus when leading the sales force in doing lead management activities. In addition, there was no structural management control processes to monitor, control and evaluate SAs' performances. Hence, the first task was to identify and discuss new sales planning process and control mechanism based on participants' past experiences. While in the process of implementing changes, participants were asked to record critical incidents or issues that they had encountered.

4.3.1 Second Cycle AR Field Work

This section presents the process of exploring and developing new processes that would help to enhance the effectiveness of HOBs in implementing lead management. As stated in Literature Review Chapter that employees are motivated when they are empowered and recognized to be part of the decision making process such as making proposal on sales strategic program . Hence, focus group discussion is used to listen to all participants and allows them to make suggestions in determining new processes. The second part of this section describes the CIT (Critical Incident Technique) approach of soliciting factual data relating to actions of participants while implementing the new processes.

The process started with the fifth Lead Management meeting on 15th June 2012 to review the findings of First Cycle. HOBs were reminded that their approved monthly activities as evident in first cycle (Appendix 4.8) were insufficient in supporting the sales force. Researcher highlighted that control on behavioral-based activities could enhance SAs' performance. All HOBs were requested to review planned sales activities and reexamine their planning processes. It was reiterated that HOBs need to apply motivational approach to inspire SA to follow new ways of doing things, especially in carrying out sales activities. The minutes of 5th lead management meeting had noted the following initiatives (Figure 4.32) would be carried out for the next stage of this study:

Figure 4.32
Action Plan for Second Cycle

<i>Action Initiatives</i>	<i>Action By</i>	<i>Methodology</i>
<i>Realigning HOB's attitude and behaviour towards their roles in implementing lead management activities</i>	<i>Researcher</i>	<i>Critical Incidence Technique</i>
<i>To set up proper framework for sales planning processes</i>	<i>Researcher and HOBs</i>	<i>Focus Group</i>
<i>To determine management control process</i>	<i>Researcher and HOBs</i>	<i>Focus Group</i>
<i>To develop training program for HOB</i>	<i>Researcher and Training Manger (RB)</i>	<i>Focus Group</i>

4.3.2 HOBs' Readiness for Change

However, to ensure success in making changes, the researcher was concerned for the participants' readiness to change. While the study group was in the process of making changes in the procedures and processes of implementing lead management, the researcher has made some assessment on participants' readiness for the changes. The

term change readiness referred to participants who were ready to take the next step from current status quo. It is an opportunity for growth and development as the expected change process is not to acquire new information and knowledge. Instead, it is a process of effecting the change in HOBs' personal perceptions and enabling them to overcome their inner resistance in executing their respective functions. The more participants understood the change process, addressed concerns to lessen resistance, and prepared their sales force to be ready for change; sales operations will be able to thrive in the rapidly changing environment. A self-perception questionnaire was used to assess the readiness to change the Sarawak sales operation. The five participants were required to rate the twenty five items by choosing one of the following. The summary of the self-assessment outcomes were as follows (Appendix 4.22):

Based on the outcomes in Appendix 4.22, three of the HOBs expressed the need for change and were in favor and ready for the change as indicated under statements No. 1 and No. 2. However, the other two HOBs were partially agreeable to the change as indicated in the statement No. 1 and did not totally reject the idea of change. Statements No. 6 and No. 7 showed that 4 HOBs recognized the importance of communication process in making changes effectively. Three of the HOBs acknowledged that the expected change is great, but agreed that it is workable in Statement No. 21. More importantly, 4 HOBs expressed confidence in the top management in making the changes as shown in Statements No. 13, 18, 21, 22 and No. 24.

4.3.3 Focus Group

Focus group was used to explore the second initiative, that is, to develop sales planning process framework. It is a process whereby changes of HOBs' knowledge and beliefs, changes of values and standards, and changes of everyday behavior become the framework of their respective life in implementing lead management in the branch. In doing so, the participants were able to realize their own full potential and fostered total commitment in implementing change. The five focus group questions (Figure 4.33) were designed to explore participants' understanding of what they ought to do as a leader in the branch sales operation. The questions were aligned with the themes and corresponding categories emerged in first cycle.

Figure 4.33
Focus Group Questions

Questions	Themes	Categories
<i>1) Think back and describe what you understand about lead management?</i>	<i>Achievement alignment</i>	<i>Sales Planning Goal setting Motivating</i>
<i>(2) Tell me your definition of sales planning?</i>	<i>Achievement alignment</i>	<i>Sales Planning Goal setting Motivating</i>
<i>(3) What do you think of when you need to have lead management activities?</i>	<i>Value alignment</i>	<i>Trustworthiness Supportive Developer</i>
<i>(4) What roles do you play in implementing lead management activities?</i>	<i>Value alignment</i>	<i>Trustworthiness Supportive Developer</i>
<i>(5) What other factors affect the success implementation of lead management</i>	<i>Governance</i>	<i>Monitoring Evaluating Control</i>

Questions were asked to prompt ideas and proposals for the sales planning framework based on the focus group discussion. The questions were open ended to spark conversation regarding sales planning. It allowed participants to provide answers in their own words. There was no time limit on each question. The researcher was present as moderator to get the discussions results. RY was assigned to record and observed the participants' behavioral patterns throughout the discussion. The role of researcher is to moderate and facilitate discussion.

The first focus group meeting was conducted on 20/7/2012. When the discussion first started with question one, all five participants were quiet and reserved. They did not talk and merely looking around anxiously to see what the session would entail. In the normal context of discussion, the participants always looked towards the leader, especially expecting the researcher to start talking first.

Recognizing the pressures and stress on the participants, researcher has requested MA to temporary coordinate and getting the discussion moving by going out of the discussion room. Subsequently, the discussion moved on slowly and smoothly, the participants were getting more relaxed environment. Researcher returned later and resumed the role of moderator. Participants started to share their opinions and experiences without fear that they will be judged or ridiculed. The outcomes of the group discussion were as follows:

Question No. 1: *Think back and describe what you understand about lead management.*

The participants were requested to write key words relating to this subject. Later, participants were asked to explain and elaborate on the key words submitted (Figure 4.34).

Figure 4.34
Key Words Submitted by Participants

HOB	Key Words
KA	<i>planning, activities, targets</i>
SW	<i>system, control, prospects</i>
KC	<i>goal setting, direction, vision</i>
BL	<i>prospects, contacts, bookings</i>
MA	<i>motivating, challenging, productivity</i>

Explanation and elaboration given on those words:

KA: Planning, activities and targets

We must have a plan for all the prospecting activities [SIC]

To do that, we must know the targets, like how many road shows @ Spring, Boulevard, Mederka Plaza etc. And don't forget outstation activities also la [SIC]

SW: System, control and prospects

Every day, we have monitor and check the SA on their prospects. If no control on them, mati la because sales won't come in and we get tembak after that [SIC]

Don't forget the lead management system, SA have to key in their prospects no matter what. They don't like to do it, but we have no choice, unless we come out with something, like manual control to replace the system. [SIC]

KC: Goal setting, direction and vision

For me, very simple, because my branch is still new. And my people are not that experience. So I need to give them direction of what to do each time. I shared my vision with them, that is to make sure everyone can sell a minimum of two units a month. Otherwise they will die, I mean cannot survive la. So I asked them to set their own goal for the month. [SIC]

BL: Prospects, contacts and bookings

You know la, boss always asked me for bookings and sales. So if no prospects and contacts where got bookings come in. I have to push my SA for the bookings everyday lo. [SIC]

MA: Motivating, challenging and productivity

Myself different. I do it this way: challenging my young team so that they all go out and do prospecting activities. They are very obedient so far because I always motivate them to work hard. Otherwise how to have high productivity? [SIC]

Question No. 2: What do you know about the definition of sales planning

KA: target setting

Not only setting target on number of activities that we want, but also the prospects, leads and bookings that we are concerned with every month. So the definition is more like sales planning is a process of setting goals and make plan to achieve. [SIC]

KC: prospecting

My English not so good. So I think it is some sort of planning the sales activities so that we can get more prospects and bookings. [SIC]

SW: planning

It is a process of doing sales plan in order to achieve sales target. [SIC]

BL: planning for sales

MA: sales plan

A process to plan sales prospecting activities in order to guide SA to achieve sales target. [SIC]

Before proceeding with Question 3, the researcher interjected the group as there was no discussion and debates on the statements made by each participant. Researcher encouraged participants to ask for further clarifications if they are not clear or certain of what have been said by others.

Question No. 3: What do you think when you need to have lead management activities?

One participant, BL reacted instantly with these words:

“ money lo (in mandarin) and no money no talk (and ended with laughter)!” [SIC]

BL further explained that more budgets were needed if more lead management activities were to be organized. However, SW highlighted that so far, for his branch there was no problem on the budgets as all his requests were being approved by regional office. In addition, KA pointed out that money should not be the issue at all as lead management activities could be organized in many ways and not necessary to go to shopping mall alone. Furthermore, he explained that it might be too costly to rent the spaces at shopping mall for longer period of time. He suggested that places like banks, industries or factory areas, outstation canvassing, high traffic outlets and others were free of charge. At this point, MA voiced her concern by supporting BL and claimed that sufficient budgets were needed by her team as they were renting shop-lots at Batu Niah for a two year contract. However, researcher clarified that the long term rental was a separate matter and further assured the group that budgets would never be an issue in implementing lead management activities.

The researcher continued with the discussion and asked participants to contribute or comment individually:

KC commented that commitment of every individual was the key for the success of lead management. He further pointed out that many times, some of his SAs have failed to participate and yet he has failed to take action on them. He admitted that he himself has neglected this important aspect of showing his concerns for the SAs. He did not spent time talking to them and identifying issues affecting their participation.

MA concurred by stating that HOBs should show good examples by joining the activities> She added and said that SAs will respect and trust HOBs more as the superiors are supporting them all the time. BL agreed and said that respect needed to be earned and HOBs must demonstrate supportive attitude towards the sales team

At this juncture, MA asked KC whether his branch has any lead management activities being planned for all the SAs. KC replied and said that he did not have any, but relied fully on SAs' personal weekly plan.

However, SW viewed that control could be another vital point to consider as he recognized his past failure was the lack in controlling the sales force in implementing lead management activities. He highlighted that he has a matured and experienced team of SAs. Hence, proper control system needed to be in place so that SAs' performance could be properly monitored and evaluated. Failing which, SAs would be lazy and would not be able to produce good sales numbers.

At this juncture, researcher reminded the group to defer discussing on control matters till the next session as the subject of 'to determine management control processes would be the next agenda for second focus group discussion. However, the majority of the participants viewed that they should continue the debate and discussion as this subject matter are related with the current topic. With consensus from all participants, MA proceeded with the discussion on control issues.

KC expressed the need of setting target for every SA in each lead management activity so that proper monitoring and evaluating process could be implemented effectively. He further explained that goal setting for SAs could drive SAs to work harder whenever they were out doing canvassing. KA agreed with KC and pointed out that he has been doing that for all his SAs whenever they were assigned with the sales prospecting activities and events. The talking and interaction increased positively in terms of setting goals for SA, not only for every lead management activity, but the overall monthly target for each SA was to be done.

Researcher realized that all participants, except BL were involved in the discussion and conversation. BL was quiet, but he did pay attention to the discussion. Hence, researcher immediately prompted a question to BL, by asking for his comments and sharing his experiences in terms of his branch control process. He responded and said

that he has failed in this aspect of proper monitoring and evaluating process. That was why he did not say anything during the discussion.

The discussion went on with comment from MA that knowing your direction was important when implementing lead management activities. She further elaborated by saying that before setting a plan for lead management activities, HOBs needed to know their respective situations, such as where to go, what type of activities, and which model to focus. SW supported by saying that being the head of branch, they should know where to attack (the market) and lead SA in the right perspective.

Question No. 4: *What roles do you play in implementing lead management activities?*

KC responded with a sense of passion in his voice and said that leaders must lead by example. He further commented that HOBs needed to get involved in every lead management activity. From his experiences, he has seen frustration moments and happy hours when lead management activities were carried out. At times, no one came to view or enquire about the products. Worst of all, SAs struggled to convince prospects to close the deals on the spot. SAs felt demoralized and HOBs could play the role of motivator.

MA shared the same opinion of motivating role played by HOBs when implementing lead management activities. Many times, SA got frustrated when they were not able to even get the names of leads and prospects of those who came to make enquiries. She enjoyed helping SAs in the process of getting in-depth information from the leads and prospects.

KA expressed the need of spot check. That is, playing a role of a policeman. He shared from his experience that many of his SAs have failed to turn up for duties when he did surprised check on the activities. However, SW pointed out that this surprised check could only be done in the city area or nearby vicinity as it would not be possible to do in the outstation towns. Furthermore, the frequency of checking could be a problem too.

On the subject of SAs' non participating attitude, MA viewed that personal counseling and motivation were required. She expressed that HOBs should play the role of selling the long term benefits of generating and nurturing leads to all SAs rather than focusing on immediate or short term outcomes, such as signing deals on the spot. KC stressed that no doubt all HOBs were desperate in getting on the spot deals, but the long term nurturing process (of leads) were equally crucial and important. He pointed out that without generating a pool of leads to work on, it would be impossible garner high number of interested buyers (prospects) every month. KA concurred and opined that this was what happened to the Sarawak branches today.

Question No.5: *What other factors affect the success implementation of lead management?*

All participants were quiet and remain silent for sometimes. Researcher then prompted the group to reflect on the findings in First Cycle.

MA whispered with a statements to herself: if u are interested with the success, surely you must make full commitment to it. Researcher, seated next to MA heard the whispering and requested MA to explain to all other participants. She challenged all participants and said that if we believed that lead management could help the branch to achieve its MTP, then HOBs need to make personal commitment and accept no excuses, but to do it wholeheartedly and deliver the results. No doubt there was a resounding consensus from all participants that their commitments in doing the lead management diligently was the key to its success, however, KA remained doubtful that SAs were ready to support this plan or not.

Researcher concluded the discussion by requesting all participants to design and propose a framework for sales planning and a management control system for all the branches. At this point, BL and KC responded by proposing KA to do the assignments as they claimed that he was the best of all the participants. The proposal was accepted by all, and the researcher requested MA to take charge and work together with KA so that the proposal could be submitted within the next two weeks.

Two weeks later, follow-up focus group discussion was conducted on 8/8/2012 and 9/8/2012. The presentation would be made by KA and supported by MA as both of them have jointly deliberated and developed the two new processes, namely sales planning and control processes, to strengthen Sarawak Region branch sales operation in implementing lead management effectively:

Two New Processes Presented by KA

(1) Sales Planning Process

KA highlighted that Stutong branch sales data and information were used as the basis for his presentations. Currently, Stutong branch 2012 monthly average sales were 48.3 units. As such, Stutong branch needed to double up the efforts in order to fulfil 2013 target of 90 units per month.

BL: the numbers looked like an impossible mission to accomplish, Alex.

KC: How are you going to achieve the figure, brother?

SW: Agreed with Chen, how are going to deliver this high number?

MA; let's hear from Alex and see what plans he has in order to support the branch.

KA explained and pointed out that with this high target, he therefore, desperately needed a sales plan for Year 2013. He elaborated on the process of getting commitment from every SA to set goals for themselves by using 2012 sales performance (Appendix 4.23) as a base to convince and get SA to commit for 2013.

KA: Two examples from the above, CKT's (top performer) and MAA's (low performer) commitment for 2013 sales (Appendix 4.24) were used to elaborate further in order to obtain commitments from every SA. The hot selling models in Sarawak, such as D40, L10, E25, should be the main focus and, therefore I am challenging SA to at least maintain the 2012 sales units. In the case of CKT, he chose to maintain L10 sales (increased by 2 units), and took up the challenge to improve the D40 sales as this model was doing well in outstation towns. N17, a new model (in B Segment) was launched in Nov 2012. Hence, he was confident that he should at least take up 2.5 units (monthly average) for Year 2013.

In the case of MAA, he was challenged to contribute at least 1 unit per month on L10 as this model attracted Malay customers more. N17, being the latest new model, targeting to sell 2 units per month should not be an issue for all SA. In addition, do you think that I am too demanding and unreasonable to request all SAs to target to sell 1 or 2 units for non hot selling models?

Appendix 4.25 detailed the 2013 sales commitments by model by SA. Upon listening to KA's presentation, SW responded that he might have problem to convince his team in Sibul since most of the SAs were very senior and difficult for them to buy-off the idea. BL commented that he expected problem to come from one of his top SA who always refused to be committed to the branch. KC and MA

concluded and supported KA's approach of challenging the SAs. However, researcher assured SW and BL that he would support them by personally meeting up with the SAs next month.

KA continued with his presentation. He pointed out that the next process of sales planning was to determine the desired number of bookings (Appendix 4.26) for each SA. KA explained that he has a buy-off with each individual SA on the targeted bookings required in order to fulfil or achieve the forecasted target. At this point, MA chipped in and supported KA by stating that, based on their past experiences, bookings committed by each SA were to be based on each individual's conversion strengths (from bookings to invoicing). She pointed out that every booking in hand did not mean sales would be materialised as there were many factors that could jeopardise the sales. Based on her experiences, MA reminded all participants that stock could be a problem due to choice of colour issue or accessories requested by customers, finance rejection issues, objection from family members, used car trade-in issues (market valuation vs. customer's expectation) and others.

KA continued to explain that SAs needed to use the above committed bookings as their targets to do the sales activities plan. KC expressed his concern that the planning process would require long hours of negotiation and discussion with SAs. SW and BL concurred with KC and highlighted that they might not have the patience to go through with each SA as some of the SAs were hard cores. However, MA opined that

all HOBs have no choice, but to put in extra effort to convince all SAs. Hence, KA highlighted that the branch total target for 2013 (Appendix 4.25) committed by SAs were much higher than the 2013 original target set (90 units per month) by the top management.

On this point, researcher highlighted and explained that this was a very important process of lead management planning. Researcher reminded the target numbers should not stopped there as the participants need to answer the following two questions,

(1) How many prospects does SA need to see in order to sign one booking? And,

(2) How many leads does SA need to generate and nurture so that they can turn into prospects?

KA: boss, sorry I totally forgot about this.

KC: I remembered this, but dare not say it la (with laughter) [SIC]

BL: sama-sama, brother, I only worried that the numbers will be getting bigger and bigger now. [SIC]

KC elaborated the reason why he mentioned earlier that long hours were needed for this planning of lead management activities as SAs are required to make more commitments by setting prospects and monthly lead targets. MA agreed with KC and encouraged all participants to get ready for this new process of planning.

SW (with a sigh): I am in trouble now.... You know la ...I have a difficult team to take care! Boss, I need you to come and help me and talk to my men! [SIC]

While other participants were debating and voicing out their respective concerns, KA checked his PC and realised that he has actually done his homework, except that he has omitted the prospects and leads column. The amended numbers were indicated as per Appendix 4.27.

After the new figures being presented, all participants were silent and lost in words.

MA: What do you all think of it? [SIC]

For a moment, no one answered the question as they were still in deep thought and trying to digest the figures presented by KA. However, KA explained that he merely used a simple mathematical calculation of multiplying the prospects by three times. He stated that the number could be more, depending on your personal judgements and opinions. MA agreed and expressed that every HOB must think carefully in coming out with the figures in the future. KC agreed and stated that it would be very challenging to get the figures and commitment from SAs. However, SW remained pessimistic as to whether his team could buy this approach.

Upon seeing resistance and concerns coming out from participants, researcher prompted the group to look into each SA's target rather than the branch target. Researcher explained further that the figure of 1799 leads seemed to be impossible as the branch was required to generate 60 leads per day. For example, BEA (SA)

targeted to generate 2.4 leads a day. The question given to participants was ‘is it difficult for an SA to look for two new leads each day?’ since he has eight to ten working hours every day. Researcher expressed further that the target of 2.4 was too low. He pointed out that higher figures could be done, if there is a plan for the lead management activities.

KA and MA agreed and commented that the attitude and commitments of HOBs would be the key to the success of implementing lead management activity. KC stated that he would do his best to adhere to this new approach. SW and BL did not comment further.

In addition, researcher prompted a question to all the participants: Look at these figures (Appendix 4.25), why was there any target being set for some of the models? There should be a ‘ZERO’ sales for these models, e.g. Navara (D22) for BEA, Serena (C26), Frontier (D22), Sylphy (G11), X-Trail (T30) for MAA and others.

All participants were surprised by these questions and kept silent for a moment. No one responded until MA broke the ice by asking KA to explain his logic.

KA: SAs have no confidence in selling those cold models and they (old SAs) have not been selling these models before.

BL, SW and KC reacted instantly (almost same time) and said Yes and agreed with KA. However, MA reminded all other participants that SAs always looked for popular models to sell. She further explained that SAs needed to commit to sell all models. KA finally agreed that it was HOB's responsibility to work out a plan to assist SA. He expressed that SAs' commitment would drive HOBs to work harder.

Researcher commended the participants' positive responses and stated that every SA should at least set a target of 1 unit for those models. Researcher pointed out that KA was correct in highlighting HOBs' responsibility in working out sales plan for SAs in order to identify the right prospects for these models.

KA started his next presentation by stating that SWOT analysis (Appendix 4.28) was done in order to determine the right strategies and action plans in order to drive SAs to achieve the short and long term goals of SAs and the branch.

BL: Alex, why is Kuching population got to do with your strength? [SIC]

KA: Ya that's my strength because I got more opportunities in the market. [SIC]

SW: It should come under Opportunity and not strength then [SIC].

KC: Branny is correct and this issue should be classified under opportunity and not strength. New models should be reported under strength and not opportunity.

At this juncture, agreed with BL, SW and KC that the above SWOT analysis was not totally correct as more information were needed to prepare a comprehensive analysis. For example, macro environmental analyses on political, economical, social and technological factors were required as these could impact on the opportunities and

threats of the organization. Researcher recognised that all participants were lacking in knowledge on this topic and suggested to skip this presentation.

However, researcher prompted the participants to examine their current internal strengths and weaknesses as these could impact the desired sales plan and the subsequent implementation of lead management. For examples, SAs current capability, behaviours, group (SA) set up, branch operating processes and practices, branch performances, productivity, network, and others could influence the effectiveness of the branch operation.

No participants responded and the room were quiet for some time. However, there were whispering among the participants. Researcher immediately proposed to give participants ten minutes to discuss among themselves and left the room so that they were free to discuss.

*MA: Boss, we need more time to collect this type of information from branch records.
SW: Agreed and it would be very meaningful if all HOBs could spend time analysing branch and SAs' performance carefully. Based on my last few months experiences in heading Sibu branch, I noticed and realized that the branch has many weaknesses, especially in the area of monitoring SA performances. Boss, I agreed with you that that in-depth study of the branch internal system and processes are vital in determining the actual strengths and weaknesses of the branch. [SIC]*

In addition, researcher prompted following questions to address the topic of opportunities presented by KA: What impact do you see in SCORE (Sarawak Corridor of Renewable Energy) within Sarawak by Year 2030? In addition, the 10

priority industries which included oil-based industry, aluminium industry, steel industry, glass industry, tourism industry, palm-oil industry, timber-based industry, livestock industry, aquaculture industry and marine engineering industry that were launched by the Sarawak state government. How do they influence and impact your respective towns, in terms of economy and society? What opportunities can you derive out of these? In addition, researcher continued to highlight on another attribute in KA's SWOT analysis, namely, Threat. Participants were reminded to examine threats that come from competitors, government policies and other external factors that could influence the automotive industry.

KA proceeded with his 4th presentation (Appendix 4.29) which indicated his direction for the branch in 2013. He emphasised that his main focus would be on the SAs' capabilities in enhancing their selling skill in order to increase productivity. Increasing sales activities would be another area of concern.

No participants have voiced their concerns in this presentation. However, researcher expressed that these strategies should fall under the action plan instead. In addition, researcher explained that strategies should evolve from market penetration, market development (two of the Marketing Strategies, namely, Market Penetration, Market Development, Product Development and Diversification), location of showroom (place), people development, process improvement and showroom conditions (part of

Marketing Mix Strategies, namely, Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process and Physical Evidence).

Hence, KA continued with his 5th and 6th presentation on action plans (Appendix 4.30) and weekly duty roster (Appendix 4.31). After hearing comments from researcher, KA realized that his action plan was lacking in totality as the plan only focused on lead management activities. All other participants agreed that the action plan should include counter measures for issues and problems identified in the SWOT analysis.

However, researcher prompted a question for participants to ponder about: would these activities help in achieving the lead targets as indicated in Appendix 4.27? Instantly, KA admitted that he has failed to link the action plan with the targets set earlier. MA agreed that all the planned activities must set with targets. BL responded that the process would be very tedious as it was not easy to work out the numbers for each activity. MA replied that the target set should be on monthly as indicated in KA's presentation. KA replied that he has no problem in determining target for each activity. KC concurred with KA, but commented that the entire exercise should include SAs so that SA could understand the concept of this lead management activity.

Researcher interrupted the discussion and quoted that he left it to each participant to decide whether SAs would be involved in the decision making process. However, he pointed out that at the end of the day, all participants need to convince SAs to buy-off this plan that indicate supports and commitments from SAs.

KA highlighted in his presentation No. 6 that without proper duty roster, SAs would be left idle and most of the times they chose to either stayed in the showroom or spending time with used car dealers who acted as they spotters/brokers for new car sales. BL agreed with KA, but he expressed his concern that he might not be able to come out with such a comprehensive duty roster. BL recognised the efforts put in by KA to draw out this daily, weekly and monthly duty roster. However, MA encouraged BL to try doing it and she was prepared to travel to Bintulu to assist BL in doing the duty roster for his branch.

Researcher commended that KA has done a great job in coming out with such comprehensive duty roster.

(2) Control Process

Before continuing with his next proposal, KA reiterated that a sale planning is crucial in the success implementation of lead management. However, the branch management needs a control mechanism as described in one of Fayol's (1949) basic management function in Chapter Two, to ensure the implementation is effective and yield results from the action taken. Hence, branch operation requires sales plan and also controlling process.

Researcher supported KA and pointed out that sales planning is a formalization of what is intended to achieve in a given time. However, a plan will not guarantee that the objectives can be achieved as there are many other factors, such as SAs'

capabilities, stock supply, financing issues and others, influencing the implementation process. Hence, control is the process of coping with changes and making adjustments to achieve the objectives set in the plan.

KA then proceeded with his presentation on the proposed control process:

KA: SAs needed to be monitored as they were undisciplined human being. [SIC] Following are the three proposed control boards: Sales (Appendix 4.32), Bookings (Appendix 4.33) and Prospects (Appendix 4.34) Sales (Appendix 4.32) and Bookings (Appendix 4.33): as the branch Admin. Officer has direct control on the daily sales invoicing and bookings (online), therefore this officer would be assigned to update the white boards every day, that is, either before office close or morning (before HOB starts the morning meeting).

Prospects (Appendix 4.34): the white board would be updated by SAs themselves during the daily meeting.

KA explained that, by getting SAs to update their own figures served two purposes: they would be proud to update the board daily if they are doing a good job and they would be ashamed if they have nil or very little numbers on the board.

No comments were made on Appendix 4.32 (Sales) and Appendix 4.33 (Bookings) by all the other 4 participants. MA asked for a show of hand if they have accepted these two proposals. All agreed, except that BL expressed his concern that his current office has no room or space to put up these three boards. However, MA suggested that the first two boards could be put up in the admin. Office and the Prospect board in BL's office. BL accepted the suggestion.

Comments made on the Prospect Boards (Appendix 4.34)

SW opined that SAs could bluff their way if there is no hard copy to show proof of prospect names and other details. MA agreed and supported by quoting that SAs needed to submit prospect list every day. With the prospect list, the white board would then be updated by the admin. Staff. However, KA expressed that there would be a delay in updating and SAs would not be looking at the figures at all. However, MA argued that SAs could be reminded on personal basis rather than in a group. KC accepted MA's point that SAs could be approached on a one to one basis in order to motivate or counsel them, to avoid embarrassment.

After hearing all the above debates, arguments and agreements among the participants, researcher prompted the group to examine Appendix 4.19 (some figures presented by KA in Appendix 4.27):

Questions given to the participants were: Why were there targets for bookings in Appendix 4.26? Were the prospects stated in Appendix 4.27, referring to HOT or Total of Hot, Warm and Cold prospects? What have happened to the targets set for lead? KA admitted that he has forgotten and omitted the targets set for bookings. The target should be included in the format as follows (Appendix 4.35):

KA highlighted that he was in the opinion of setting a total target, and not by model for each SA as it would be too tedious and cumbersome for the SAs to do it. MA agreed and requested other participants for confirmation. KC, SW and BL have agreed to accept the proposal.

On the second question, KA explained that the in Appendix 4.30, the numbers were referring to hot prospects only. He was unsure of how to include the warm and cold prospects in the format. KC responded that Warm and HOT prospects should be combined as one and Cold prospects should be separated, but it should be classified and grouped as Leads target as Cold prospects could even be prospects that have not shown interest in buying yet. BL and SW concurred and supported KC's proposals. KC agreed, but pointed out that it would take long time to convince them to agree with the current market price then. BL supported KC's argument. At the end, MA accepted KC's proposal to classify and grouped Cold prospects together with new leads.

As such, KA amended format for the prospects control board as per Appendix 4.36.

Researcher continued to throw in additional questions to prompt the group to look into control issues in the lead management process: 1) The above control boards were appropriate for the branch control in terms of managing the SAs' performances. What control systems or processes do you need in order to assist SAs that were not performing? 2) Targets and objectives were set for each lead management activities before it was carried out. Do you need to evaluate each activity after implementation? And how do you do it?

MA took over the chair and started the discussion on question 1. She highlighted the following processes that she has been practicing in her branch:

- a) Training and coaching – regular trainings were conducted for the unproductive SAs as they were weak in product knowledge. Coaching was done in a one-on-one basis in order to build up SAs' confidence in selling skills.*

- b) *Counselling – Firm action needed to be taken on those SAs that consistently failed to participate in branch sales activities.*

KA agreed with MA's practices and added that close monitoring and follow-up were required to ensure that these unproductive SAs were doing their parts in searching for new leads and prospects each day. He highlighted that daily meeting in the branch was made mandatory in his branch. He set up a system to penalise those who failed to turn up for meeting to pay a fine of RM50.00 each time. KC agreed with SW that to set fine on SAs might not be good, instead, he prefer to have 'coffee talk' with those SAs that have failed to respond to branch practices and procedures. Coffee talk is an informal discussion with SAs at mamak stall or coffee shop. It could encourage SA to open up freely. BL instantly supported the idea.

With regards to question No.2, MA proposed to the researcher that regional should come out with a format for evaluation purposes. All the other 4 participants supported MA's proposal.

4.3.4 Final Outcomes of Focus Group Discussion

The findings were consistent with the first two themes and corresponding categories as developed in First Cycle (Figure 4.31). The theme of 'achievement alignment' is acknowledged by all participants as the fundamental role of HOBs. KA has even started his presentation by focusing on goal setting for the SAs and subsequently leading the focus group in the sales planning process. These topics (goal setting and sales planning) were accepted by all other participants and they were able to participate and contribute ideas in the discussion.

Participants' reflections on **achievement alignment** theme and **sales planning, goal setting** and **motivating** categories have established that a transparent alignment between sales leaders' words and actions was an important feature of sales managers

who were responsible for the entire operation of the branch. The effect of a HOB demonstrating consistent value in achievement alignment was a reputation for integrity and trustworthiness in implementing lead management effectively in the branch operation.

In responding to Question Three, two HOBs have reiterated that they should demonstrate high **value of integrity** in order to earn respect and **trust** from SAs. In addition, another HOB pointed out that training could be conducted during the road shows as HOBs can assist SAs in negotiating and concluding the deals. The theme of **leadership integrity** was well described by KA when he made his 4th presentation. He pointed out that his main focus in determining the branch strategies was to support and strengthen SAs' capabilities and selling skills. The key statements used by KA to demonstrate his focus in **supporting, developing** or training and motivation were:

- *Double up sales activities*
- *Encourage peer learning & teaching*
- *Training SA*
- *Motivating SA*

On the other hand, the third theme, **governance** and its corresponding categories of **monitoring, evaluating** and **control** (Figure 4.31) were identified in the literature that highlighted on HOBs' behaviour-based control system. HOBs acknowledged that to ensure the success of implementing lead management action plan, they were required to supervise and monitor sales people performance. In addition, behavior-

based control systems need to focus on the monitoring of sale force activities. The behavior-based control will enhance and do better in meeting branch goals. It is a management tool in sales as it is able to influence sales people's attitude, behavior and motivating them to perform better in order to achieve their personal desired goals and objectives. Based on the findings in the focus group discussion involving 5 HOBs, it was decided that SAs needed to be challenged to achieve higher goals. It was a new insight of challenging and inspiring SAs to draw their strengths out in order to achieve the higher goals set. Goal setting has great influence on SAs engagement and commitment, and thus could impact on their performance in the long run. Furthermore, by obtaining SAs' commitments, they would then work voluntarily and harder in order to achieve the desired goals. Hence, all participants have agreed that the goals for SAs would be based on different models with target being set for sales, bookings, prospects and leads.

In this respect, HOBs' managerial roles would be focusing on the planning, monitoring, directing and evaluating sales people's performance. Hence, the participants have concluded that sales force control is recognized as an important managerial process of ensuring SAs are properly guided and monitored for the lead management activities. In principle, sales force control systems are managerial procedures that could influence SAs' behavior and enhance their performance. Furthermore, in the discussion, HOBs gain better understanding of their tasks and are able to acknowledge that motivating their SAs are the key to the success implantation of lead management activities. The final outcomes of focus group discussion were the

development of two new processes by the 5 HOBs (Appendix 4.37 and 4.38). With these two processes being determined, the researcher has instructed all the participants to practise and implement lead management by using these processes.

4.3.5 Critical Incidents Technique (CIT)

As highlighted in Chapter Two that through shared leadership process, the team members are able to share responsibilities and strive for common goals. The success in implementing lead management is depended on the nature of the working relationships HOBs and SAs. This relationship has great impact on the effectiveness to influence the sales force in achieving the goals. While trying to make changes in the branch sales operation, HOBs needs to demonstrate their leadership skills to change the behavior of sales people in implementing lead management. Appreciate Inquiry process allow participants to reflect on ways to leverage on their strengths and potential to implement change. Change is a time of conflict that will result participants feeling bitter, frustrated, disappointed, and pressured while doing things differently. All HOBs have experienced frustration and stressful moment while taking the lead in implementing new processes to strengthen lead management. HOBs' CIT reports have recorded their personal reflections while implementing the change. The summary of the respective critical incidents and issues were reported under Appendix 4.39, 4.40, 4.41 and 4.42. Based on the summary of CIT reports, the contents were analyzed for themes. The following items were identified as critical incidents (Figure 4.35, 4.36 and 4.37) as these issues were classified as critical success factors of branch daily sales operation:

Figure 35

Summary of Critical Incidents for First Theme

Based on HOBs' Tasks	Description of Critical Incidents	Categories	Themes
To initiate action plan and ensure targets are achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To get SAs to set goal for themselves To get SA to commit their final invoice, prospects and leads target 	Goal setting	Achievement alignment
To inspire SAs to perform better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To motivate SA in doing lead management activities Doing motivational talk personally by HOB To gain SA's commitment 	Motivating	
To initiate action plan and ensure targets are achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparing Sales Plan To prepare 2013 sales plan Poor outcomes of lead management activities 	Sales Planning	

Figure 4.36

Summary of Critical Incidents for Second Theme

Based on HOBs' Tasks	Description of Critical Incidents	Categories	Themes
To equip and strengthen SAs' competencies and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To coach and train SA SA could not get names of leads when doing prospecting activities To get RB to conduct training 	Developing	Leadership Integrity
To build strong relationship and influence SAs' to perform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To convince all SAs to join cold canvassing activities To convince SA to follow the branch activities plan Challenging task to convince SA 	Trustworthiness	
To build teamwork and strengthening of relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personally participating in all prospecting activities 	Supportive	

Figure 4.37

Summary of Critical Incidents for Third Theme

Based on HOBs' Tasks	Description of Critical Incidents	Categories	Themes
To manage sales performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily updating of sales figures on white boards 	Control, Monitoring, Evaluating	Governance
To monitor sales performances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To go through SA's daily prospects and leads • Time consuming to check SA's prospects and leads everyday • To monitor SA's participation in prospecting activities • To ensure full participation of SA in sales activities • To ensure success implementing of new processes of lead management • To check SA's prospects and leads everyday 	Monitoring,	
To ensure SAs' full commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing of lead management is a headache • To get SA to submit prospects and leads daily is a big problem • SA not consistent in submitting leads • Receiving inconsistent prospecting listing from SA daily • To update control boards daily • Keying in leads and prospects in lead management system • SA failed to join prospecting activities 	Control	
To inspire and challenge SAs to perform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective usage of control boards • Using of visual board 	Evaluating	

The manner to which the leaders engage with the subordinates is important as it has great impact on their job commitments. Many participants have expressed and reflected the commitment they placed on supporting and developing their sales force even though they encountered resistance from SAs. The participants' reactions to counter this resistance have demonstrated a shift in their behaviour. The strong commitment of the participants has shown that they are seeking resolution rather than to avoid conflict in their interactions with SAs. It was evident that HOBs have started to give full support and providing necessary training for SAs.

As highlighted in some of the CIT reports, participants have put in great effort in trying to solve problems they have encountered. They are overcoming obstacles and resistance while guiding the sales team through new ways of implementing lead management. They have gained momentum in leading the sales team in implementing the lead management activities despite the fact that not all SAs were supporting of the plans. As reflected in the CIT reports, participants have committed themselves in building relationships with SAs. They are doing their very best in connecting with the SAs even though difficulties arise in dealing with some senior SAs.

The issues of leadership integrity and its corresponding categories were strongly reflected in the incidents reported. Despite the pressure encountered while trying to introduce changes in the lead management implementation process, participants were able to demonstrate trustworthiness, supportive and served as mentor and coach to

ensure success in the implementation of lead management. In essence, the participants have changed and now believe that the new processes could lead them to greater success in the long term. In conclusion, participants' strong commitment to the development and promotion of new change in lead management process has strengthened their status in the branch as they have gained respect from the SAs. Hence, participants have gained the trust of SAs as they have demonstrated, over time, transparent value between their words and actions taken. Furthermore, their reputation for trustworthiness was built up over a period of time through what they have said and was consistently reflected in their actions. They managed to give SAs a sense of assurance in supporting the SAs to perform better.

HOBs have also committed themselves in building relationships with all SAs and doing their very best in connecting with them even though there were difficulties in dealing with some senior SAs. KA has even demonstrated his honest realization that his autocratic style of leadership in the past could not gain support in leading the sales team. He has changed and never tries to rule with a stick; instead he opted for a personal touch approach, whenever he dealt with difficult SAs. Even MA has quoted in her October report that personal touch was very important in dealing with SAs. BL has expressed that through his personal touch approach, he has gained respect from his top SAs, who had been challenging him in the branch.

4.3.6 Reflection for Second Cycle

As the action research continued, it is apparent that although the participants, could come up with some good ideas and insightful suggestions for improvement, however, it required outside stakeholders, such as the HQ and Sarawak Regional training managers' participation and support to ensure success in implementing change programs. The commitment demonstrated by participants to put into practice those ideas and suggestions that they have given need the support from top management. The initiatives taken by participants in pushing for implementation of lead management activities have attracted enthusiasm from a majority of SAs.

It was good practices that all participants have acknowledged the informal channels of communication with SAs, like coffee talk, privately or personally talking to SAs whenever they have faced with problems. The private talk and informal meetings is effective to bond with the sales teams and have gained success in convincing the SAs to support lead management activities.

More importantly, participants have focused on changing the attitude of individual SA and nurture their relationships with SAs in implementing lead management activities. The communication process is an important mean in building relationships with SAs, and relying on the strength of these relationships to resolve issues encountered. However, participants were not prepared to contravene mandatory rules, but they were committed to working with SAs to resolve complex situations. The

action adopted by participants demonstrated their behavioral change in aligning with the process of implementing lead management.

Leadership is not a solo act; instead it's a team effort. As pointed out in Literature Review Chapter, by empowering the subordinates to make decision, they would be motivated and inspired to perform better. Hence, it was the right move in using the focus group discussion to explore ideas for the process change in lead management. Trust within the operation played an important role in enhancing the interaction between researcher and the five participants in developing new processes and control procedures. Because of the significance and collaborative nature of the study, the process required a high degree of trust among the working committee. The focus group demonstrated collaboration, respect and trust for each other while debating on issues and problems faced in implementing lead management in the branches. It was evident that participants' reflection of their respective past experiences in managing and leading the sales forces have helped in contributing ideas and suggestions.

The researcher was successful in enhancing participants' confidence by empowering them in the focus group discussions which was being stressed as one of the data collection techniques. In the discussions, participants were given the opportunities for growth and power to get things done. By using empowerment approach in the group discussions, the researcher has entailed the shifting of decision making process to the participants. It was evident in the focus group discussions that all participants'

openness and willingness to share ideas freely have helped in developing good outcomes for the effective implementation of lead management. The researcher has created a climate of trust, and allowed participants to be free in contributing ideas and suggestions for the sales operation. As such, participants have demonstrated a high degree of commitment as they were very open and actively participating in the discussion.

Through this study, the key lesson gained in this cycle was the effectiveness in terms of communication. Effective communication facilitates the process of information sharing, and team accountability. In the focus group discussions, participants were able to share information based on their past experiences and performances in fulfilling their responsibilities in leading the sales force. In addition, the communication process allowed participants the freedom to determine and express their own actions and behaviours while implementing lead management in their respective branches. Furthermore, participants were able to work as a team in contributing to the decision making of new and enhanced procedures for the implementation of lead management activities.

Trust is the basic human behaviour that allows subordinates to contribute ideas without fear. Trust and empowerment given to participants has strengthened participants in the various aspects of their management and leadership behaviours, namely, (i) Making decisions of their own; (ii) Having access to information for

making proper decision; (iii) Able to provide a range of options from which they can make choices; ((iv) Ability to exercise assertiveness in collective decision-making; (v) Having positive attitude in making changes and, (vi) Ability to influence one another's perceptions by democratic means.

In addition, managing change is crucial in the effective implementation of lead management. Competent management is required to keep change initiatives on track. Therefore, the much bigger challenge is leading change. Leadership can push through the many sources of inertia in the sales operation. Effective leadership can motivate the actions required to change behaviour in a significant manner. Hence, HOB leadership effort needs the support from SAs in executing the change in lead management activities.

All participants have demonstrated their commitment to the values they espouse by setting good example in supporting the SAs in implementing lead management activities. They have earned the respect from the sales team and able to sustain credibility in the long run. In the process of building credible examples, participants have reflected in their respective behaviours that they paid attention to what they have done. As such, participants were trusted by the SAs as they were consistent in their deeds and words. The behavioural changes demonstrated by participants have given great confidence to the SAs.

The second part of this cycle has reflected the values recognized as being associated with characteristics of effective leaders. Effective communication was often reflected by participants, in their CIT reports, as integral to the demonstration of relationship-centeredness built with the sales force. It was evident participants' commitment to listen and consider the views of SAs who rejected the new ways of doing lead management. Participants' readiness to consider viewpoints, expertise and abilities of SAs has helped to build confidence in the sales team. Thus, they were able to get SAs to support the change initiatives. Furthermore, by seeking SAs' understanding in the decision-making process is an important aspect of effective communication demonstrated by the participants. As such, this golden rule practiced by participants has enabled SAs to feel respected.

Lesson learned from this second cycle was to lead effectively, it is important for leaders to value people. The open communication demonstrated by participants has helped to establish strong relationship with SAs. Participants were sensitive to SAs' needs and interests when they encountered resistance from them. Learning to understand and acknowledging things from their perspective is vital in building trusting relationships with SAs. Trust is the foundation of leadership. Hence, HOBs cannot influence SAs if they don't trust them. In order to build relationship and gain trust from SAs, HOBs have to work hard to connect with them. In doing so, it increases the influence with the SAs in supporting the implementation of new processes in lead management. Hence, with trusting relationships, leaders would be

able to get extraordinary things done through the change process of lead management.

In addition, changes could not be achieved by participants alone. They needed the cooperation and collaboration of the SAs in order to function effectively. As such, leaders have to promote a sense of mutual reliance of getting everyone in the sales force to work together. Mutual reliance can only be achieved when the leaders has mutual goal and agreed by the sales team. Leaders have to learn to create a climate where SAs are involved and experienced a sense of personal achievements in executing lead management plan. They have to learn to lead as leadership is learnable. While leading the sales team, effective leaders should constantly seek for ways to improve themselves. It is about setting themselves free and a change in mindset.

To build confidence in SAs, initiatives in developing the SAs are of great importance in the process of producing high commitment and productivity in them. In branch sales operation, developing the competency of SAs is recognised as one of the key roles of the HOBs. They should be genuinely interested in coaching, mentoring and training the sales force personally and not rely on the training managers. Traditionally, in this organization, HOBs have not been doing their part in developing and training the SAs. In taking the lead in training SAs personally, HOBs could use

their skills and talents to coach the SAs and thus building strong relationships that make a lasting difference between them.

4.3.7 Summary for Second Cycle

The initial stage of implementing these new processes was a big challenge faced by all participants. To change old mindset and habits and substitute new one is a long term process. Furthermore, human being tends to revert to old and familiar patterns of getting things done. In addition, to influence the diverse group of SAs with different cultural background, academic and selling experiences in Sarawak branches was not an easy task for the participants. In recognizing these facts, researcher has cautioned and reminded all participants to do it step by step and not to rush in getting things done at one go. In strengthening SAs' understanding and commitments, participants have formed strategic alliance by placing certain key SAs in their task forces in developing the plans and execution of the plans.

In the process of implementing change in implementing lead management, HOBs were able to recognize and exploits the SAs' needs, especially the selling skills, product knowledge and confidence in handling affluent customers. In the process of change, HOBs managed to shape, alter and elevate the needs, wants, value of SAs through their key leadership roles. Transformational leadership approach emerged and being demonstrated by HOBs while executing the new ways of implementing lead management. The findings showed that all HOBs were now focusing on

development, inspiring and motivating SA in implementing lead management activities. This resulted in an inspired group of sales force who were prepared to go an extra mile in accomplishing their tasks. The behavioural change of HOBs has created a much healthier and conducive working environment in the branches.

The findings and conclusion derived from second cycle were as follows:

- HOBs have started using the new approach of preparing sales planning, coordinating, and providing infrastructure to support SA in implementing lead management activities.
- HOB were using the recommended control board to monitor SA's performances
- The informal meetings and discussions have set the pace for HOBs to build strong relationship with SAs.
- HOBs have initiated training, coaching, mentoring and guiding SA in order to strengthen their competencies and skills
- HOBs have personally participated in lead management activities

4.4 Final Cycle

This final cycle presents the chronological process of top management's acknowledgement, acceptance and endorsement of recommendations made by researcher. The first section of this cycle outlines the presentation made to TCM Executive Director (ED) with regards to AR findings and outcomes of Sarawak Region. The second section of this cycle highlights the process of how ED disseminates key messages of change to TCM HOBs during National Sales Leadership Forum. The third section of this cycle describes the acknowledgement of

changes by six other regional heads, namely, Northern, Eastern, Southern, Central (Selangor & Wilayah), and Sabah as presented during their respective Regional Sales Convention. The final section details HQ's adoption and standardization of new approach of selling and introduction of new programs to strengthen the sales operation of TCM.

4.4.1 Action Plan for Final Cycle

As evident in the above review that leadership effectiveness has great impact to the implementation of lead management. HOBs have demonstrated that their leadership efficacy, where they were focusing on sales force achievement. They were competent in developing strategic plan for the branch operation. It was also reflected in their behaviors that their proactive and positive attitudes has great impact in influencing SAs to participate in lead management activities. Their commitments in implementing lead management have shown effective leadership is essential in motivating their SAs to reach their maximum potential and support the branch action plans.

The new process of lead management and control system would be standardized and implemented in Sarawak region. The next course of action (Figure 4.38) for this AR would be to brief and obtain endorsement from top management in HQ.

Figure 4.38

Action Plan for Final Cycle

Action Initiatives	Action by
Brief Top Management on the new sales planning and management control processes implemented in Sarawak Region	Researcher
Make recommendations of the new processes and support required to HQ Top Management	Researcher
Implementation and Standardization of new processes in Sarawak Branches and HQ	Researcher
Seek HQ's endorsement and Standardization of new processes in the company	Researcher

4.4.2 Sarawak Region's Presentation to ED

The following presentation was conducted to brief ED when he visited Sarawak branches in mid-April 2013. All lead management committee members (including the five HOBs, RB and RY) were invited to the meeting with the ED. The agenda of the meeting were; i) Researcher to brief ED on AR study conducted in Sarawak Region and, ii) KA to present the outcomes of AR.

Researcher started the meeting by presenting the overall MTP of Sarawak region to the ED. It was highlighted to ED that the main objective of this action research was to critically evaluate the effectiveness of HOBs in implementing lead management and prepare them to strive towards achieving the MTP by 2016. Followings were the presentation:

It was highlighted that Sarawak region needed to reengineer its operation in order to achieve higher goals for the MTP. The branches required transformation in every aspect of their business processes. The current practices were too conservative and lacking in focus. Researcher pointed out that HQ has invested thirty to forty thousand ringgits every month to organize events, road shows and promotional activities to support branch sales operation. However, branch sales people were only interested with the total number of prospects generated. More importantly they were hunting for prospects that were ready to sign deals with them. SAs were busy running around searching and hunting for prospects. Furthermore, a great majority of SAs were not interested to develop their networking, nurturing the contacts and build long term personal relationship for future sales opportunities with potential prospects.

ED noted the facts and expressed that he was aware that the entire company faced similar situation. He agreed that something needed to be done, but commended the effort initiated by Sarawak Region to strengthen the sales operation.

In the meeting, researcher also highlighted that both HOBs and SAs need to change in their approaches in order to achieve higher goals. Traditionally, HOBs have mindset of increasing the number of SA as any incremental unit brought in by the new SA could help to improve the branch productivity. In this case, HOBs' main concern was on the branch overall performance, and not developing SAs to improve their individual selling skills. HOBs have totally neglected this important task that

SAs need to be trained. HOBs' commitments in driving the sales force in achieving high performance were lacking. They were focusing to achieve short term monthly targets via hunting approach but not on developing SAs for long term performance.

Currently, researcher further highlighted that there was no sales plan being developed at all the branches. ED was surprised to note that HOBs have no sales plan for the branches and SAs. Researcher pointed out that SAs were left doing their own thing. In addition, researcher mentioned that monitoring and control processes were lacking in the branch operation. HOBs were only interested with month end outcomes on the number of vehicle units to be invoiced. They were focusing on achieving the immediate or monthly sales targets set up by HQ. Their main concern for prospecting activities organized at shopping mall was the number of bookings signed during the display. No effort was put to nurture leads being generated for future sales.

Researcher made an appeal to the ED with regards to the legacy lead management information system. Researcher reiterated that the current information system available for branch operation was mainly for administrative function. HOBs were totally ignorant of the entire process as they relied on the branch administrative officer to handle this invoicing function. Although lead management information system was available to all branches, but only use for invoicing purposes only. The system was used as part of the process of validating vehicle invoices. SAs have failed

to update leads generated into the system. In addition, there were several weaknesses in the current lead management information system.

Researcher stressed that Sarawak branches have standardised the new processes of sales planning and control mechanism to plan, monitor and evaluate the branch lead management. Furthermore, it was highlighted to ED that HOBs' mindset have changed positively and able to act proactively to implement the new processes. They have gained valuable experiences while leading and influencing the SAs to support the implementation of lead management activities initiated during this AR.

KA presented the new sales planning process (Appendix 4.37) to the ED.

KA used figures in Appendix 4.23, 4.24, 4.25, 4.26 and 4.27 of Second Cycle to elaborate the process and concept of how HOBs influenced SAs' commitment to set goals for themselves. Two examples from the above, CKT's (top performer) and MAA's (low performer) commitment for 2013 sales (Appendix 4.24) were used to elaborate further in order to obtain commitments from every SA.

KA:

The hot selling models D40, L10, E25, to challenge SA to maintain the 2012 sales units. CKT (top performer) maintains L10 2012 sales, increase D40 sales target, N17, a new model take up 2.5 units (monthly average) for Year 2013.

MAA (low performer: to contribute at least 1 unit per month on L10. And N17, being the latest new model, targeting to sell 2 units. In addition, to target 1 or 2 units for non hot selling models.

The detail 2013 sales commitments by model by SA were presented as per Appendix 4.25. KA pointed out to ED that the overall 2013 sales target was stretched from 1082 units (set by HQ) to 1599 units (committed by SAs). There was an increase of almost fifty percent (48 percent) of the original target (Appendix 4.27). ED commented that this was the right approach of setting branch stretched target. It has been his past practices of getting regional heads to set their respective stretched targets (for the region).

KA continued by stating that SAs would then be guided to set targets for the bookings, prospects and leads in order to achieve the goals committed earlier (Appendix 4.27). KA further explained that SAs needed to use the committed targets to do the sales activities plan.

ED was excited with these target settings as he pointed out that the region was now on the right track of leading the SAs. He made the following statements and further stressed that this approach of setting targets has made the SAs to understand the sales process better:

“In order to achieve sales target, you need sufficient bookings to invoice. Where do you get bookings then? It is through the follow-up process of reaching out to the prospects in hands! By actively going out building relationship and networking, more leads could be generated and subsequently identified as prospects when they expressed interest in our products”[SIC]

KA further elaborated that the commitments of SAs were based on individual past performances and SAs' expectation for the coming year. The SAs' were challenged to set a higher stretch target and the branch would develop programs and activities to support them. The new management control process (Appendix 4.38) was explained in great detail. KA explained that daily morning meeting with SAs is necessary as HOBs could get feedback from SAs on the previous day's activity. It is also a platform for HOBs to follow up on new leads generated. KA further reiterated that prospects and leads generated on the previous day need to be submitted by SAs.

KA used the white board control concept (Appendix 4.32, 4.35 and 4.36) to highlight the process of managing and evaluating SAs' performances. SAs' individual targets committed would be used as the basis to evaluate their daily, weekly and month-to-date performances. KA further pointed out that these control boards could be used as motivational tools to inspire SAs to work harder as they are able to compare the performances of other SAs. KA continued and highlighted that HOBs will no longer depend on Regional or HQ to conduct training program for SAs, instead they will set up weekly training calendar for the SAs.

In summation, researcher made the following recommendations and proposals for top management's consideration:

- (1) To support regional effort in implementing lead management by applying the concept of prospecting through networking (nurturing process)
- (2) To provide training to HOBs and enhance their competency and skills in developing, coaching, mentoring and motivating the SAs
- (3) To determine and standardize the HOBs' job responsibilities
- (4) To evaluate and enhance the current lead management information system

ED was very impressed with the overall presentation. He expressed his confidence in this new approach in implementing lead management at the branches. In addition, he was even excited with the new selling concept of farming or nurturing process and not the usual way of hunting for sales. He made a surprise request in his closing remarks by inviting Sarawak team (researcher and a representative from Sarawak HOBs) to present their initiatives in National Sales Leadership Forum for all HOBs in the company to be held in Kuala Lumpur. The scheduled date for the said forum was in June 2013. Researcher and the Sarawak team felt very honoured and excited with the invitation to present Sarawak initiatives to all HOBs of TCM.

4.4.3 HQ's Action: Adoption of Standardization

This first section highlights the process of how TCM ED disseminates key messages of change to TCM sales leaders during National Sales Leadership Forum. Key messages (highlighted in bold) of all presenters during the National Sales Leadership Forum which was held on 15th June 2013 were used to highlight Sarawak Region's recommendation to the ED during his visit in April 2013.

The second section outlines the acknowledgement of change in selling approach, namely, from hunting for sales to farming or nurturing of leads for future sales opportunity, by the five regions, namely, Northern, Eastern, Southern, Central (Selangor & Wilayah) and Sabah Regions during their Regional Sales Convention in September 2013. This section also details HQ's adoption and standardization of introducing of new programs and processes to strengthen HOBs' and SAs' competencies. The final section ends with reflection of final cycle.

ED's personal assistant (PA) sent researcher an e-mail dated 23rd May 2013 explaining the key ideas to be delivered in National Sales Leadership Forum. It was surprised to note that some of the ideas given were similar to the ideas presented to ED during his last visit to Sarawak in April 2013. The abstracts of contents in the e-mail were as follows:

*“Theme is UBAH@tc.my..... main emphasis here is on change and.....Mainly, we need to talk about **changing the way we work and our mindset**. And **HOBs as the leaders** and pioneers to move into this new mission, they need to be onboard with the change as our vision has change (from 35k to 100k). **Doing the same thing and hoping that we will achieve the same results will not work for us**. If we want to meet our vision we must change the way we work and bringing it back to customer satisfaction. We have been just **chasing prospects (hunting)** but we have forgot that it's important to maintain/ care for existing customers, **nurturing them (farming)**. Hence, the talk about balancing the **hunting vs. farming**, and why we need to do both and knowing when to do so etc..... We should also consider that the things we will be sharing should also **be something that we need to implement (or to be implemented later on)**.....” [SIC]*

The above messages indicated ED has taken note of the findings and outcomes presented to him during his visit to Sarawak region in April 2013. He has taken personal interest in recommendations and wanted them to be shared with all branches. The following were the key messages to be used as the basis of presentation by all presenters during the National Sales Leadership Forum:

- (1) HOBs' mindset and approach of doing things need to change
- (2) Hunting vs. Farming (nurturing) philosophy

The proposed agendas (Appendix 4.43) for the said National Sales Leadership Forum have caught researcher by surprise as Sarawak presentation would be given 90 minutes (60 minutes for researcher and 30 minutes for KA) while other presenters were given 10 minutes to 30 minutes to present.

In his invitation letter to all sales leaders, the Executive Director (ED) has stated:

*“this forum is the first we have catered for our branch managers and sales leaders alike **focusing on bring about the change we envision in order for us to continue moving forward in achieving our new vision.....Change is not just in the way we work but also in changing our habits and mindsets.**to have you with us at the forum to hear what our management team and colleagues have to share about moving into the new vision and taking the lead with our people.....”*

The ED made his personal appeal to all sales leaders to dedicate themselves for tomorrow and do wonders in their works. He reminded all branch managers and sales leaders not to conform to the old practices of hunting, but be transformed by

renewing of their mind and start the **UBAH (change) by cultivating or farming** to build up strong relationship with prospects. He challenged all sales leaders to get ready in order to influence their SAs in striving for higher performance. He highlighted that it was time to change and **not to continue chasing and hunting for prospects but rather they should start to farm or nurture the leads** to harvest future sales opportunities.

Marketing Director's presentation

The second speaker of the day, Marketing Director (MD) started his presentation by highlighting the company's new vision and MTP by Year 2016, namely to be No. 1 in non-national makes segment and contribute 120,000 units with 18 percent market share. MD also appealed to all sales leaders to UBAH or change (theme of the day: Ubah@tc.my). He pointed out that change is hard in the beginning, but would be messy in the middle of change process. However, he assured all that change would bring gorgeous moments at the end of the tunnel of change. He reminded all sales leaders to unite, believe in the company's MTP and vision and aligned to their actions by applying the holistic processes to complete the transformation to improve productivity. He further pointed out that the MTP target is not easy, but requires sales leaders to be ready for the competition and start to build relationships with customers and prospects.

Head of Marketing's Presentation

The GM of Marketing highlighted that his department would be allocating more money and organizes more activities and events to support branches in generating leads. He stated that the leads generated would be channeled to branches so that SAs could follow up closely and build up relationship with these leads.

Head of Customer Care & Training's Presentation

Head of Customer Care used Stephen Covey's quotation to elaborate her points on the expectation from an effective leader and how leader can be the catalyst of change. She was appealing to all sales leaders to take up the challenge and take the lead in influencing SAs to start the new ways of doing sales. In addition, she highlighted that sales leaders have to start developing their SAs by **coaching** and **mentoring** them. In addition, she appealed to all HOBs that they should take charge of the sales operation and start **training, coaching** and **mentoring** of SA in order to achieve MTP by 2016. She highlighted that HQ would be organizing two training modules for HOBs to enhance their skills. The two training modules are Coaching and Role-Play and Role-Play Engagement and Facilitation

Head of Sales Planning' Presentation

The Head of Sales Planning started his presentation by quoting Malay proverbs:

“ Kais pagi makan pagi, kais petang makan petang”

He highlighted the current scenario in the company with the above Malay proverbs. What he meant was that the company's outstanding bookings in hand were weak and it looked as if that the company was living from hand to mouth. There were too many stocks in HQ waiting for customers. He pointed out that it was time to UBAH (change). By using the conversion ratio formula, he elaborated the figures required for a branch that has a monthly final invoice (FI) target of 50 units: The branch needed total booking of 72 in order to fulfil the target of 50 units target as only 70% of the total bookings were invoiceable. Based on his assumption, to obtain 72 bookings, the branch was required to build up a prospect database of 240 as only 30% of the prospects could be converted into real bookings. On the other hand, the branch needed to generate and build up a pool of 800 leads as only 30% of them would qualify and be termed as prospects.

These illustrations stressed the importance of the concept of **farming and nurturing**. The presenter further urged sales leaders to start preparing their respective targets based on the examples quoted by him. This is consistent with the approach used by Sarawak Region in getting SAs to provide their personal commitment to the branch as highlighted in earlier. He continued his presentation and emphasised that sales leaders are required to develop sales prospecting plans by initiating more **behaviour-based activities to generate leads**. **Daily monitoring** process was needed to review SAs' prospects. In addition, he touched on the efficiency of sales leaders in ensuring bookings signed were quickly converted into sales.

Sarawak Team Presentation

Researcher started the presentation by reminding all sales leaders on the ED's call for change, that is, to break away from just hunting for prospects and to start the farming process of relationship building. The figures shown in Appendix 4.44 were used as examples to stimulate the sales leaders mind. By using the same conversion ratio (used by Head of Planning), 70 percent of total bookings (8100) were invoiceable and able to achieve the desire target of 5670 units. Therefore the daily bookings required were 331 bookings.

Subsequently, the daily bookings were tabulated and broken down into regions (Appendix 4.45). This is compared with the expected daily bookings of each region for year 2016. Looking at the current trend (actual daily bookings) of daily bookings, the expected numbers of bookings for year 2013 would be a miracle for some regions to achieve, especially Corporate Sales Unit, Southern Region (STH), Selangor Region (SGR) and Northern Region (NTH). More so, when comparing with Year 2016, the figures were almost triple for almost all regions.

Hence, researcher made an urgent appeal to all sales leaders to change their current way of managing the branches so that the MTP goals could be achieve by year 2016. The areas of concern were categorized under; People, Management and Technology (Appendix 4.46).

The researcher highlighted the leadership issues and problems encountered in managing the lead management. The poor acceptance of the lead management information system was presented to all sales leaders. Researcher reiterated that it's time to make a change in the approach of leading the sales team. Researcher pointed out that the old ways of merely hunting for prospects and signing bookings from the various events and road shows were no longer effective. Instead, HOBs were reminded to adopt farming approach of nurturing leads that were generated during these events and road shows. Researcher pointed out that by focusing on the leads, SAs could build relationship with new leads and converted into prospects. It is a long process of cultivating friendship through this networking approach.

Researcher pointed out to all sales leaders to do away with the 'telling culture' currently being practiced in the branches. The telling culture was referring to what the sales leaders have always done, that was,

'I don't care how you do it, but just give me 4 units of final invoice (FI) every month will do'. 'If you don't, you would be out in three months time'

Researcher took this opportunity to appeal to all sales leaders to be more caring when they lead their sales force. Transformational leadership concept was being highlighted to the sales leaders and stating that leadership is a process of directing and influencing SAs to do the task in order to achieve the desired goals. It was not to penalise them when they have failed to deliver as instructed. Instead, they should

coach, mentor and train the sales force. In addition, sales leaders were reminded of their respective tasks as highlighted by Head of Customer Care & Training and Head of Sales planning that SAs were to be trained and developed in order to enhance their competency skills.

Researcher used Otto Scharmer's Theory U in his closing remarks to challenge all sales leaders needed to wake up and start making themselves available for the change in order to be effective and successful in the managing and leading their respective branches. In order to shape and influence SAs to practice the new ways of doing sales, sales leaders themselves needed to build up their own integrity and lead the sales team. In addition, sales leaders were reminded that SAs needed personal attention and to be motivated. However, researcher assured the sales leaders that top management would provide the necessary tools and training for them as highlighted by Head of Training earlier.

KA's Presentation

Researcher introduced the next presenter from Sarawak who would elaborate in greater details the management tools and processes that were initiated and adopted in Sarawak Region when implementing lead management.

KA started his presentation with the remark that in 2013, selling 90 units per month looked impossible to him as his 2012 monthly performance was only 46 units. However, he pointed out that with the support from HQ and right strategies, he took up the challenge by developing a business plan for his branch. He quoted that “if he failed to plan, he was planning to fail!” KA presented his SWOT analysis which took into consideration the local political scenario, economical environments (SCORE Projects), social and cultural factors and, examining the competition, and also the challenges encountered internally (strengths and weaknesses of the branch). Following were his strategies for Stutong branch (Figure 4.39).

Figure 4.39

Strategies for Stutong Branch

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Initiatives</i>
<i>Market Penetration</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>New models introduction to strengthen our market share</i> • <i>Capitalize on current strength of Navara, Urvan and Grand Livina</i> • <i>Evaluate & identify potential customers, e.g. Government servants</i> <i>Organise events and special offer to attract customers to buy Nissan</i>
<i>People Development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Advertise in local newspapers & through words of mouth to recruit more SA & balance up the low sales SA</i> • <i>Uphold Nissan brand through attitudes and behaviours of SA</i> • <i>Enhancing SAs’ competencies to increase productivity</i> • <i>Double up sales productivity per SA and double up sales efforts, activities and strategies</i>
<i>Process</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Aim to have 5 units sales per SA per month</i> • <i>Team up SA in 2-3 persons with a team captain</i> • <i>The captain shall lead the team for canvassing, activities, road shows, and showroom duty</i> • <i>Weekly training and coaching programs</i> • <i>Used car valuation technique</i> • <i>Motivation talk</i>
<i>Market Development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Increase road shows and lead management activities in the city and surrounding towns</i> • <i>VIC (Very Important Customer) Program</i> • <i>Projects File Program</i>

Figures as shown in Appendix 4.23, 4.24, 4.25, 4.26 and 4.27 were used to demonstrate how targets were set for SAs in Stutong branch. The committed figures might look ambiguous and impossible to achieve. However, KA used two SAs as examples, CKT (top performer) and MAA (low performer) to elaborate further (Appendix 4.24, 4.25 and 4.26). KA further explained that it was not unreasonable to insist MAA to commit at least 1 unit Grand Livina (popular model in Kuching) per month, 2 units of Almera (new B-segment model) per month, 0.75 units of Navara (hot selling 4x4 model) per month and challenging him to sell 0.5 unit of Urvan (popular van), and 1 unit per year for Latio, Serena, Sylphy, and Teana (difficult and unpopular models in Sarawak). KA pointed out that efforts were needed by both the SA and the HOB to develop action plan (Appendix 4.30) to support him. At least SA was fully aware of his performance indicator for the year. SA was required to plan and identify customers that he has committed. Traditionally, KA pointed out that SAs did not put in effort to follow-up for a particular customer. They found the customers (of a particular model) by chance and luck. Therefore, it was right time for sales leaders to start directing SAs to target the right customers by implementing the farming approach of selling. KA pointed out that the formula used to get SAs' commitment for bookings, prospects and leads was similar to what Head of Sales Planning who has presented earlier, to use individual conversion strength to determine the numbers. The conversion strength (or ratio) depended on SA's personal experience, competency and confidence as claimed by KA.

KA continued and highlighted that this Action Plan No.1 was focusing on the overall plan for lead management activities which took into consideration the local yearly activities and events. Appendix 4.31 showed the detailed of monthly, weekly and daily schedules for the branch lead management activities. With this detail schedules, SAs were given their respective tasks and no one would be exempted for them to make prior appointments with their customers. To monitor and evaluate SAs' performance, KA highlighted that Kuching branch has started using the three control boards, namely; prospects (Appendix 4.36), booking (Appendix 4.35) and, sales (Appendix 4.32) to monitor individual performances.

KA concluded his presentation and pointed out that the control boards have a mirror effect, whereby SAs were able to see their own performance and compared with others. In the way, as pointed out by KA, SAs were challenged and being motivated to push themselves further after reading the numbers on the control boards. The control boards could be used to guide SAs when meeting up with them on one-to-one basis. KA encouraged sales leaders to consider this approach used by Sarawak branches as he claimed that they were proven to be effective.

Group Workshop of National Sales Leadership Forum

After Sarawak team's presentations ended, the Sales Leadership Forum continued with group workshop. All HOBs were divided into group of five in each group. The objective was to allow sales leaders to share lessons learned from the various

presentations and the areas that they can implement and improve in their respective branches performances. One of the groups (Group No. 3) leader made a stunning statement in the share back session:

“The current lead management system is hopeless. The company need to look into it and should consider introducing technologies and applications as all SAs are using Smartphone nowadays”

The message from this HOB has reinforced the similar request made by researcher during the ED’s visit to Sarawak Region in April 2013.

ED’s Closing Remarks

The message was clear and the top management, especially the ED, who has IT background before joining this company. He expressed to the participants of the forum that he would personally look into this IT matter. However, he made his last appeal to the sales leaders, especially the respective regional heads to take note of the changes required in order to push for excellence performance in the years to come. He made his personal commitment to the floor that HQ would come out with programs to support the branches in implementing change.

4.4.4 HQ Adoption of Standardization

This section outlines the acknowledgement of change in selling approach, namely, from hunting for sales to farming or nurturing of leads for future sales opportunity, by

the six regions, namely, Northern, Eastern, Southern, Central (Selangor & Wilayah) and Sabah Regions during their Regional Sales Convention in September 2013; and also, the adoption and standardization of new processes and programs to enhance HOBs' and SAs' competencies and skills.

HQ Adoption of Standardization No.1: Farming Approach of Selling

With the closing remarks made by the ED during the National Sales Leadership Forum on 15th June 2013, all respective regional heads were requested to organize regional sales convention (Figure 4.40) for the SAs to lead and implement change. Two key messages were to be highlighted and delivered to the SAs during regional sales convention; namely,

- (i) To appeal for mindset change
- (ii) To adopt farming approach of selling

Figure 4.40
Regional Sales Conventions

Region	Date	Region	Date
<i>Eastern</i>	<i>3rd Sept. 2013</i>	<i>Northern</i>	<i>13th Sept. 2013</i>
<i>Sabah</i>	<i>10th Sept. 2013</i>	<i>Southern</i>	<i>18th Sept. 2013</i>
<i>Sarawak</i>	<i>11th Sept. 2013</i>	<i>Central</i>	<i>20th Sept. 2013</i>

Followings were the selected key messages presented during the respective regional sales convention.

Eastern Region Presentation

As the majority of SAs were Malays in Eastern Region, the presenter used Bahasa Malaysia in his presentation. He appealed for a change in mindset and encouraged them to work hard in following the farming approach of relationship building with the prospects. In addition, he highlighted the importance of technology, especially the mobile and wireless technologies to enhance ways of doing sales.

Sabah Region Presentation

Sabah Regional Head took the stage by making a strong motivational call to all SAs. To be a champion, SAs needed to aspire and think big for the years to come. They need to set goals for themselves. SAs need to build and strengthen his basic competencies in order to have confidence in doing sales. The regional head appealed to the SAs to make changes in the way of thinking, their behaviours and attitudes when they do plan daily, weekly and monthly sales targets.

Northern Region Presentation

The Northern Regional Head made an appeal to all Northern SAs that their mindset needs to change to gain to be successful in sales. He pointed out that there were great

opportunities for SAs to hunt for prospects and convert them into sales. However, the farming approach should also apply to those cold prospects as relationship building helps in long term sales opportunity. In addition, he emphasized on the use of new technology to support the sales activities.

Southern Region Presentation

The Southern Regional Head used the chicken and egg story to stretch his points on hunting and farming approach of achieving sales. He quoted by appealing for a change in mindset so that SAs would not be hunting for the chickens which were running about (outside). Instead, SAs should be focusing on taking good care of the eggs and start to hatch them in order to nurture the chicks for the future. He further stressed that SA should be focusing strongly on the leads and start to build friendship with these leads. In times to come, SAs should be able to capitalize these opportunities when the leads express interest in buying cars.

Central Region Presentation

The Central Regional Head appealed to the SAs for a change in their mindset and attitude so that they will be discipline and work hard in order to achieve greater success in their sales profession. The farming approach of nurturing the leads was emphasized.

HQ Adoption of Standardization No.2: Smart Phone Application for Lead Management Information System

After the National Sales Leadership Forum, ED has written an email dated 20th June 2013 to the researcher and Northern Regional Head which read as:

*“Gentlemen,.....For as long as the **prospecting system** is residing in some machine somewhere hidden in the bowels of the company the **adoption by the SA will be minimal**. There is just no payoff for him! Taking it out to the streets, and **integrate with Whatsapp or similar application**,is probably better....” [SIC]*

The ED recognized the urgency of making a change in the current lead management information system as proposed to him during his last visit to Sarawak in April 2013 and also the comment made by one of the branch manager during the National Sales Leadership Forum in June 2013. Hence, the ED made his request for the development of new information system for SAs known to the IS Dept. (Information System Department).

Subsequently, the smart phone application project started with an email dated 25th June 2013 which was sent from the ED to IS (Information System) experts in the company and stated:

“I think I may have found a good solution and I would like to share with you. It almost meets my thinking of what the applications should do. Can I talk with you tomorrow? I am excited!” [SIC]

Multiple meetings were organized between the ED and the IS (Information System) team. In the end, the management has decided to implement new information system. However, it was agreed to outsource the project since IS Department did not have the expertise to handle the new system. Whilst IS team was negotiating with external sources, internally, the ED called for meeting with SAs who would be the end users, namely selected SAs to hear from them on smart phone usage and application. The first brainstorming meeting with Central Region SAs was held on 3rd July 2013 to gauge their response to the new lead management system based on a mobile phone application platform to replace the legacy system. SAs were requested to give their input to develop the new mobile phone based applications. Their following feedbacks were subsequently taken into consideration by the IS team and messages were conveyed to the application provider:

- Easy to use: anywhere and any time
- Instant information provided
- Must indicate booking status
- Able to view vehicle stock availability in the branch and HQ
- Product presentation demonstration via Smartphone

Subsequently, on 24th July 2013, a draft proposal to develop new lead management system was submitted to top management for approval. The objectives stated in the proposal were:

- (1) Equipping and Empowering Sales Advisors

- To develop an easy to use mobile application that will enable SAs to update and manage leads and, follow through sales opportunity through an online, real time application based on a mobile terminal
- The mobile application will facilitate SAs to increase bookings by providing them with up-to-date vehicle and product information, vehicle movement and stock information, sales leads and, immediate sales entry

(2) Supports for HQ and Regional offices

- To assist HQ and regional to support, manage and monitor SAs' progress
- Timely updates from HQ on critical information communicated directly to SAs (e.g. stock levels and incentive updates)

It was highlighted to top management that the benefit of this mobile application is cost effective solution in order to improve lead management and access to information on real time. Followings are the advantages of the mobile application as compared to the current system (Figure 4.41):

Figure 4.41

Benefits of Mobile Application

Current System	Proposed Mobile Application
<i>Lack of systematic lead management approach</i>	<i>Provides systematic lead management approach</i>
<i>SAs do not have immediate access to crucial information (e.g. stock level)</i>	<i>Speed of information – mobile application will empower SAs by providing them with up-to-date information</i>
<i>SAs spend time in branch to obtain leads</i>	<i>Support SA mobility to generate leads</i>
<i>Reliance on high cost marketing campaigns and materials to reach customers</i>	<i>Cost effective method to approach customers</i>

The proposal was approved by top management on 24th August 2013 with a budget of more than one hundred thousand ringgit. The top management was serious in implementing this new lead management system nationwide. The project timeline was developed (Appendix 4.47) by IS Department. A pilot project of the mobile application was launched with the proposed 11 SAs (Figure 4.45). The pilot project indicated positive feedback from the 11 SAs. Subsequently in March 2014, it was launched nationwide.

HQ Adoption of Standardization No.3: HOBs’ Job Scope and Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

Traditionally, there was no job description being developed for sales leaders, namely, Branch Managers (HOBS), Sales Managers, Assistant Sales Managers and Sales Executives. Different regional heads would apply different criteria (Figure 4.42) to evaluate HOBs’ performances at the end of each year. In addition, similar attribute of KPIs was given different weightage by the different region heads. HOBs main focus was on the outcomes of sales achievement. Hence, it was not surprising to note that HOBs have transactional leadership as they were not required to develop SAs.

Figure 4.42

HOBs’ KPI Used by Regional Heads

Criteria	Northern	Southern	Central	Eastern	Sabah	Sarawak
Sales Target	√	√	√	√	√	√
Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Target	√	√	√	√	√	√
Used Car Stock	√			√		√
Profit		√	√			
Recruitment of SA	√			√		

The company’s performance management system (PMS) has not been implemented effectively and successfully. With strong support from Head of Human Capital Management (formerly known as Human Resource Department) to develop and standardize HOBs’ job responsibilities and KPIs, the ED has agreed in principle on the proposal as suggested by researcher. That was the reason why the Head of Human Capital Management (HCM) strongly supported the proposal as he has failed to make the change in the past. Subsequently, researcher was requested by ED and Head of HCM to draft job responsibilities and KPIs for HOBs. The proposed draft (Figure 4.43) was sent to all regional heads for comments before it is adopted and approved by ED.

Figure 4.43
Proposed HOBs’ Job Responsibilities and KPI

KPI	Job Responsibilities	Weightage
Sales Performance	To lead , plan, organize, direct and control the sales team in the branch so that the targets for vehicle sales are met	40%
Customer Satisfaction	To lead the implementation of branch customer relationship management initiatives so that the targets for customer satisfaction and customer retention are met	20%
Staff Development	To lead the implementation of SA development programs for the branch so that a high level of productivity, competence and commitment can be achieved	20%
Branch Administrative Control	To lead the implementation of branch control processes so that a high level competence, efficient and productivity of branch operation can be met	20%

The proposal was finally being approved by ED with additional KPI being included for for Regional Managers, State Managers and Assistant HOBs in the format (Appendix 4.48a, 4.48b, 4.48c and 4.48d) for implementation.

HQ Adoption of Standardization No.4: Training Programs for HOBs

As recommended by researcher to the ED during his visit to Sarawak in April 2013, HQ is required to develop training programs for HOBs so that they are competent to carry out their responsibilities effectively and efficiently.

First, a 3-month training program (Figure 4.44) for all sales leaders was developed:

Figure 4.44

Training Program for HOBs

Program	Facilitation & Mentoring for HOBs	
Objectives of program	of	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To equip and develop HOBs to improve the overall performance of their respective Sales Advisors• To equip, empower and inspire HOBs to facilitate effective “role-play” and client engagement practices by Sales Advisors• To align, train and enable HOBs to better manage, mentor and coach their sales teams to maintain professional and best practice sales engagements
Durations		2 Days per session

Second, senior management has accepted researcher’s strong recommendation that training program is to be developed to enhance sales leaders’ leadership and management skills and competency. Branch Management Development Program (Appendix 4.49a, 4.49b and 4.49c) was developed and approved by senior management on 17th February 2014. Figure 4.45 showed the program outlines for one of the modules of the approved Branch Management Development Program which is relevant to this AR. The program outlines for other modules of BMDP are attached in the appendixes (4.49b and 4.49c).

Figure 4.45

Program Outlines of Sales Management

Program Outlines of Sales Management	
Module	Learning Objectives
Roles of effective Sales Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to examine the business evolution and implications for sales management • Add value through multiple roles as strategist, business manager and talent manager • Able to plan, direct, monitor and review sales activities (e.g. road shows, showroom events and other sales activities)
Vision in sales leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning sales goals with corporate goals and values • Selecting your market strategies to further penetrate the market
Managing sales performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using tools to measure and manage the performance of the sales force • Create sales budgeting, forecasting and projecting • Monitoring and reviewing the sales funnel (from prospecting to booking to Final invoice)
Talent management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and implementing the talent management process • Creating own profile of successful sales persons • Recruiting and hiring sales team • Coaching and training sales team • Conducting sales meeting

4.4.5 Reflection for Final Cycle

As described in Chapter Three that shared power means that team members get motivated as they are empowered to fully participate in decision making. Power will always be associated with leadership. It was in line with the above philosophy, the ED of the company was applying the same technique and approach while calling for change. It was evident during the National Sales Leadership Forum, he has personally made the appeal to all sales leaders to change and start the ball rolling in their respective branches. It was clear that he did not make it a top down policy of making

the change, instead, he empowered the respective regional heads to take the lead of initiating the transformation in their respective region. In his closing remarks, the ED made it clear that he will expect the regional heads to take fast and responsive actions to initiate change and transformation in the branches.

The lesson learned from here was that individual accountability is a critical element of every collaborative effort. As regional heads, they have to do their part in order for the group of sales leaders in the region to function effectively. It was evident in the respective regional sales convention that regional heads have started making the appeal to their respective HOBs and SAs to change the way of doing sales in the branch.

In recognizing the impact of mindset towards human behaviors, the ED and all other presenters were sowing positive seed in the sales leaders mind that positive thought is always the seed of a positive result. The most significant change in a person's life is a change of attitude. It was reflected in his opening speech and his invitation letter that he has requested all sales leaders to come with an open mind and be ready for change. Very often, when sales leaders were confronted with new way of doing things, they would cling to routine practices and reject new ideas. Hence, top management deliberately making an appeal to the frontline sales leaders by requesting their peers from Sarawak region to present their new framework of processes and structures that were implemented in the branches. Sarawak Region's simple strategy of sales leaders

winning step by step, could build personal and subsequent group commitments. However, strengthening the knowledge of sales leaders is essentially the process of building confidence in them and making them capable of acting on their own to lead change.

4.4.6 Summary for Final Cycle

The opportunity of making our recommendations to top management was made possible when the ED came on-site to view and hear what has been done in Sarawak. This was the turning point of getting full recognition for the programs during ED's visit in April 2013. By personally witnessing the sales leaders' behavioural change in challenging the SAs, to enhance their commitment towards achieving goals helped to strengthen ED's understanding of the lead management processes implemented.

ED has also personally championed the National Sales Leadership Forum initiatives. He personally vetted through all presenters' materials and ensured that the messages were in alignment to his call for change. It was an honour to know that ED's thoughts were aligned to what had been transpired from the action research conducted in Sarawak region. It was important to note that the new selling philosophy of farming approach is recognised and being adopted by all, namely from HQ top management to SAs at branch level. Without the support of top management, the new approach would never take off and being applied by the branches. In addition, the introduction of smart phone application has facilitated lead management processes as the

application assists SAs to generate and manage their leads at anywhere and anytime. Furthermore, SAs are encouraged to record leads using the smart phone application as the management will reward them with RM1.00 per lead being generated by SAs.

This research had brought forth the issue of obsolete lead management information system. It has resulted reaction from the top management to introduce mobile application in the company. None of the SAs or HOBs utilised the legacy system when it was first introduced in year 2006/2007. Furthermore, the project was approved with a budget of more than a 100k within three months after our recommendation in April. We have never requested for change of system, but to enhance the system. ED's attention in making a change to strengthen the implementation of lead management information system went further by proposing a new mobile application for the usage of SAs. The commitment of top management in developing training program for HOBs was an encouragement to all HOBs. The tradition and culture being practiced by company is only focus on doing sales. HOBs were not responsible to develop and train the SAs. The training program being proposed by ED caught many HOBs by surprise too. It definitely takes time to build this new training culture in the branch sales operation.

Furthermore, other regional heads have responded positively to the call by top management during the National Sales Leadership Forum to initiate changes within their own regions and branches.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND HQ ADOPTION

5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents a summary of AR findings that addressed the three principal questions of this study: Are HOBs leadership in TCM Sarawak region successful in implementing lead management? What are the factors that influenced the effective implementing of lead management in TCM Sarawak region? And, How TCM Sarawak region could enhance its HOB's effectiveness in implementing lead management? All these three questions were answered with the findings that identified the characteristics of effective leadership and management of HOBs.

The first section of this chapter outlines the findings that addressed the research objectives which were identified in the first two cycles of AR processes. The second section highlights the implications for both theory and practice. The third section describes key research implications and outcomes of the study. The final section concludes with the discussion of study limitations and suggestions for future research.

Overall, key findings from this AR have shown that the HOBs leadership in implementing lead management in TCM Sarawak Region was not effective and successful. The findings of the study revealed that leadership behaviors have a significant impact on the successful implementation of lead management in TCM

Sarawak branches. The outcomes of the study have provided evidences that factors involving leadership behaviors and their management competency in planning and control influenced the successful implementation of lead management. Hence, the results of this study have provided answers for first two research questions. At the same time, third question was answered with the recommendations of new processes and programs which were implemented and adopted by the participants in TCM Sarawak Region. The new processes and programs have provided empirical evidences that effectiveness of HOBs could be enhanced by adopting changes based on the themes derived from this AR.

5.2 Concluding Results from First and Second Cycle

The findings of this research have addressed and answered Research Question One as described in Chapter One. As evident in first research cycle, Sarawak Region HOBs were not effective and successful in implementing lead management in their respective branches. Firstly, HOBs leadership quality was the key issue affecting the successful implementation of lead management in Sarawak branches. Their leadership behaviours showed very little consideration in developing the SAs as there was no personal coaching or training being done by HOBs themselves. Four of the HOBs have failed to use positive influence in leading the sales team. Instead, they behaved arrogantly and applying transactional approach to push for sales achievements. Leadership is to develop human potential, able to inspire and enhance creativity of sales force in supporting the branch in implementing lead management

activities. However, the findings have shown that these behaviours were not being demonstrated by the HOBs.

Based on the findings, all HOBs in Sarawak Region have failed to commit themselves in managing the implementation of lead management. Generally, HOBs have failed in monitoring and evaluating SAs activities and performance regularly. Furthermore, HOBs have failed to guide, monitor, supervise, enforce or facilitate sales prospecting. The findings indicated that HOBs were lacking in behaviour-based sales management control strategy in improving the implementation of lead management. Furthermore, the current lead management information system is not user friendly and thus affecting HOBs' successful implementation of lead management. HOBs have to use manual control mechanism to monitor and evaluate SAs' performance in implementing the lead management activities.

The study identified that HOBs' uncommitted attitudes was one of the main factors that have affected the success of lead management in the branches. It is a fact that when sales managers (HOB) lack focus and commitment, even good processes will also not being executed due to their ingrained habits (and attitudes) and negative attitudes in their overall performance. Overall, the findings of this study have shown that HOBs did not have adequate planning, coordinating, and providing infrastructure to support SA in implementing lead management activities. They are lacking in the leadership activities of HOB with regards to monitoring and controlling of SA's

activities. In addition, they have failed to evaluate SAs' performances. Furthermore, HOBs were incompetent in providing training, coaching or even mentoring for their SAs.

The findings have provided an interesting illumination on the leadership potential in leading the sales force while implementing lead management. This following section details the results drawing from researcher's interpretation and aligned with the research objectives namely; to examine the competencies of HOBs in implementing lead management in TCM Sarawak Region, to identify factors that influenced the HOBs competency in lead management implementation in TCM Sarawak Region and, to develop a process and/or a program that can help to enhance HOBs' effectiveness in implementing lead management in TCM Sarawak Region.

This AR had identified three main factors that influenced HOBs effectiveness in implementing lead management in TCM Sarawak Region. The three factors are outlined under the main themes presented in Chapter Four.

Rich (1997) highlighted that credible and effective leaders aligned plans to achieved organizational goals. Achievement alignment (Theme One) is supported by House & Aditya (1997) that successful leaders are able to influence and motivate people in the organizations and to implement strategies to achieve organizational goals.

Furthermore, Conger and Kanungo (1998c) opined that effective leaders need to promote positive attitudes and behaviors that could inspire and motivate subordinates to achieve organizations' desired goals.

Sales planning (First sub-category of Theme One), goal setting (Second sub-category) and motivating (Third sub-category) were vital in supporting the branch to achieve desired goals. Anderson and Oliver (1987) pointed out that sales managers are required to execute and discharge sales management activities, such as planning, monitoring, directing and evaluating activities. Furthermore, Dubinsky (1999) highlighted that sales managers are responsible for sales performance. They are in the position to evaluate the situation to develop strategic plan for the company. Sales managers have control over their sales plan as they are directly involved in the daily sales activity plan.

However, the results in First Cycle have shown that all HOBs were lacking in these values. There was no long and mid-term structured plan being developed for the branch operation. The results contradicted with Jorfi and Jorfi's (2011) notion which states that sales leaders need to align organizational objectives with strategic plans in order to achieve the organizations' long term goals. HOBs did not set goals and targets being for the branch operation. The few monthly road shows and events organized to generate sales were insufficient. The action of organizing road shows were consistent with the comments by Albers, Mantrala, and Sridhar (2008) who

highlighted that personal selling is an important driver of organization performance and, Jones et al. (2005) opined success of personal selling would depend on sales manager's response to organize sales prospecting activities. In addition, Henry (1975) pointed out that sales leadership activities, such as territory coverage, can have great impact on sales people's performance. As such, the HOBs are required to possess proactive decision making behaviors as it could help in developing a longer term strategic plan to strengthen the branch sales operation.

In essence, the HOBs responded confidently and expressed that they were already doing their very best in organizing sales activities, except there was no goals being set in terms of sales target by month and by vehicle models. Hence the sales activity plans were organized on ad hoc basis, as and when the HOBs felt necessary. There was no target being set as to how many sales prospecting activities were required to generate the number of leads, prospects and bookings for the month. There was no structured plan base on monthly desired number of sales prospecting activities required as the participants have no clear direction for the branch. Conger and Kanungo, (1998c) opined that the behavior of leaders need to have high sensitivity to the subordinates' desires, able to articulate a clear vision for the organization, and inspire followers to follow their attitudes and behaviors. The findings showed that the five HOBs have failed to articulate vision for their respective branches.

Subsequently, in the Second Cycle, HOBs have started to determine sales target for individual SAs. By getting SAs to take lead in setting their own goals is to promote positive expectations, rather than dictating and forcing the terms on them. HOBs have even changed their approach in gaining commitments from the SAs. Previously, a majority of the HOBs would use their authority to enforce their decisions. With the change in behaviors, participants were trying to build friendships with SAs. In other word, HOBs were applying the humanistic approach and be connected with the SAs concerned.

The new behaviors demonstrated by the five HOBs are consistent with Burns (1978), who commented that transformational leaders could help to strengthen the subordinates' awareness and importance of company goals, and influence followers to see beyond their own self-interests towards the benefits of the organization. HOBs have adopted transformational leadership approach, using personal influence to motivate SAs to implement lead management activities. HOBs' new behaviors is also in line with Bass and Avolio (1990), that transformational leaders could encourage SAs to go beyond their comfort zone and prepared for change towards progress.

Goal setting has great influence on SAs' engagement and impact on their performance. SAs are now prepared to work harder and followed the scheduled plans of the branch. It has proven that by getting SAs' commitment in goal setting, the branch was able to obtain positive engagement with SAs. To achieve better

performance in the branch, it is necessary to ensure that SAs are provided with direction and targets to enhance their commitment at work place.

Chuang et al. (2011) pointed out that transformational leadership focuses on motivational processes and has great impact on the effectiveness of subordinates' overall performance. In addition, Bass and Avolio (1990) have expounded that leaders are regarded as inspiring figures, and able to inspire and motivate their subordinates to believe that they are capable of overcoming challenges and strive to achieve the goals. Conger and Kanungo (1998c) concurred and supported Bass and Avolio (1990) that effective leaders would promote positive attitudes and behaviors to inspire and motivate subordinates to achieve organizations' desired goals.

The Second Theme emerged from data is Leadership Integrity that focused on leadership behaviours. High integrity is fundamental to leadership effectiveness as it demonstrates basic honesty and moral behaviours of leaders. Brown and Trevino (2009) highlighted that value-based leadership is a process whereby leaders transmit values messages that resonate with employees. In addition, Badaracco and Ellsworth (1992) opined that the pursuit of goals, leaders ought to demonstrate personal values that constitute integrity and trustworthiness.

Leader demonstrating positive personal values is important for the development of effective leadership standards in the organization. Hence, leaders are simply people with high personal values, exercising this personal influence to accomplish organizational objectives. Leaders need to possess qualities that differentiate them from the subordinates. Leaders generate trust through the credibility of their behaviours. In essence, credibility is the foundation of effective leadership.

Trustworthiness values (First sub-category of Theme Two) stressed the importance of leadership commitment to excellence. Sales leaders articulate the principles for which they preach, what they say and do must be consistent with the aspirations of their behaviours. The alignment between effective sales leaders' action and what he has said would be the defining characteristics of leaders. Therefore, the essential quality for effective leadership is not only perfection, but credibility and trustworthiness. Liberali et al. (2013) stated that trust is only meaningful when leaders are able to inspire and influence subordinates to believe and support them.

As pointed out by Chun (2005), integrity is vital in ensuring leadership effectiveness. In addition, Chun (2005) used the terms honesty, trustworthiness and integrity interchangeably. The leaders' behaviors must be aligned with their words and actions in order to gain respect and trust from the subordinates. Leaders who engaged in behaviors that did not reflect a strong value of integrity, would not gain the trust and support from people that they are connected with. Hence, transparency as opposed to

concealment is recognized as important element in the development of relationship that is built on trust.

Sales leaders who were not able to demonstrate a high degree of credibility and trustworthiness, it would be difficult for them to develop relationships with the SAs. Without strong relationship, the sales leaders would find it difficult to influence the SAs in discharging their duties. The relationship between SAs and their leaders would be strained as there would be little communication to iron out differences. This has an impact on the implementation of lead management as SAs were not able to provide full commitment due to lack of trust to their leaders. However, the situation in the branches changed dramatically in the Second Cycle.

HOBs have taken note of the evaluation and findings from the First Cycle. HOBs have initiated one-to-one talk, discussion and dialog with SAs who have resisted to ideas and instructions of the branch. Some of the participants have even spent long hours after office hours to have 'coffee talk' (TCM company jargon for an informal discussion) with the SAs.

Supportive values (Second sub-category of Theme Two) communicate the treatment of sales people by HOBs. In the First Cycle, HOBs were inconsistent in providing support to the sales team. The findings are not consistent with the findings of Smallen

and Leach (1999), who indicated that team members are required to work together in collaboration if the team wants to be successful. Collaboration is a long-term cooperation and coordination of efforts in order to achieve common goals. It involves genuine sharing of accountability and resources. In addition, Clemmer (1995) pointed out that to be effective, leaders are required to be in contact and be visible to the team members whenever possible.

The findings from First Cycle showed that HOBs have not paid attention in development (Third sub-category of Theme Two). They have not trained the SAs. Instead, they always wait for HQ and Regional Office to conduct training for SAs. Harmon et al. (2002) opined that sales people are effective and productive when leaders provide adequate training to them. Although, HOBs did acknowledge the importance of equipping SAs with the tools, knowledge, and selling skill that they need in order to be more effective and efficient in doing sales, yet, they have failed to train the SAs.

It was evident in the study that HOBs' initial behaviors have negative impact on the SAs' job satisfaction and commitment. In the First Cycle, it appeared that no transformational leader attributes were present among HOBs. They did not demonstrate high energy and focus on developing each individual SA. HOBs failed to take note of the importance of individual consideration highlighted by Bass (1999) that individual consideration is to be displayed when leaders pay attention to the

development needs of subordinates where support and coaching are provided to improve the subordinates' skill and knowledge.

During the Second Cycle, the participants have started to engage and have close interaction with their SAs. The findings showed that issues could not be settled in the meetings were handled separately in an informal way. SAs were invited for individual for discussion and HOBs would listen to them. The reaction of HOBs is in line with the comment by Sher & Gottlieb (1979), collaboration between subordinates and leaders is the key factor for every successful organization. Hence, HOBs have acknowledged this by personally getting in touch with individual SA whenever they encountered resistance in implementing lead management. HOBs have begun to demonstrate the behaviours as described by MacKenzie et al. (2001), that transformational leadership is strongly related to interactive behaviors such as supporting the subordinates and enhancing sales people performances in lead management activities. HOBs' interactive behaviors have demonstrated that they care for the SAs. One way of showing they care is to consistently paying attention to the SAs on what they do daily.

The essential repertoire of effective leaders is how they spend their time with the sales team. HOBs were consciously on the lookout for ways to establish themselves in supporting the SAs. HOBs have demonstrated caring values that have strengthened SAs' confidence and trust on HOBs.

According to Dubinsky, Mehta and Anderson (2001), the development of leadership expertise has great impact on the effectiveness of leadership. In addition, findings from First Cycle was not in line with Bass (1999) that individual consideration is displayed when leaders pay attention to the development needs of subordinates where coaching is provided to improve the subordinates' skill and knowledge. It appeared HOBs did not demonstrate transformational leadership behaviours. HOBs were described as transactional leaders as they are more concerned in achieving the monthly sales targets.

As pointed out by Morgeson (2005), coaching is a day to day interaction between leaders and subordinates in pursuing the common goals derived by constantly having dialogue with them. Hence, it was not surprising to note that HOBs have failed to pay attention to the need of the SA. In First Cycle, HOBs claimed that they have insufficient time to carry out lead management planning. Furthermore, they were aware their incompetence in conducting training and coaching. They have been making request to Regional Trainer (RB) to support them in conducting training and coaching programs for the SAs.

During the April, 2013 presentation to the ED, researcher has made an appeal to HQ to develop training programs to equip the HOBs. Subsequently, it was announced in the Sales Leadership Forum in June, 2014, that the training program for HOBs would be developed. Ben-Hur et al. (2012) highlighted that leaders' ability in providing

advice is no longer depended on traditional learning process, but instead being coach by 'expert'.

Furthermore, there is a need for a cultural change that supports the coaching approach in the company. The current job responsibilities of HOBs did not indicate this function in their KPIs. As suggested by Ben-Hur et al. (2012), the use of both process solution of effective discussion and insight solution of getting a coach or mentor in helping the SAs in doing their sales are critical. Successful coaching happens in an environment of trust and respect between the sales managers and sales staff. It is only when the staff trust and respect their leaders, they are willing to obey and follow the instructions of the managers. Hence, HOBs have expressed their concern in this aspect of providing training to SAs as they have failed to deliver proper training to the SAs in the past.

The Third Theme of Governance is consistent with Su et al.'s (2015) argument that senior management need to impose behaviour-controls system to ensure sales activity, operating procedures and rules to be successfully implemented. In addition, Barone and DeCarlo (2012) opined the importance for sales managers to evaluate sales people performance as it has great impact on sales people' productivity and, also the organization's long term success. Sales management control has great impact on sales people performance and organization effectiveness.

According to Langevin and Mendoza (2013), management control system has great impact on strategic decision making as valuable information are available to sales managers. It is a process of ensuring sales force is properly monitored (First sub-category of Theme Three), evaluated (Second Category of Theme Three) and control (Third sub-category of Theme Three) so that SAs are challenged to enhance their performance. This function of supervision is consistent with the remarks by Oliver and Anderson, (1994) that sales people need proper guidance in performing their sales activities. In addition, Vuksic et al. (2013) highlighted that in order for organization to remain competitive, control systems are needed to monitor and evaluate the performances.

In principle, sales force control systems are managerial procedures that could influence sales people behavior and enhance their performance. In this respect, sales managers' behavior-based control would be focusing mainly on the planning, monitoring, directing and evaluating sales people's performance. Henry (1975) opined that appropriate sales management attention is required to monitor sales people's behavior and impact on their behaviors and outcomes. Sales leadership activities in monitoring the SAs can have great impact on their performance as HOBs need to know and understand the plan and progress of SAs' activities.

It was evident during the Second Cycle that HOBs have started to monitor SAs' performance. They were prepared to spent long hours to discuss with unproductive

SAs. They started to see things from SAs' perspective and walked in their shoes when faced with challenges from some of the hard cores or non conforming SAs. Grant and Cravens (1996) defined sales people's performance as an evaluation (Second sub-category of Theme Three) of the sales people's behavioral outcome performance. Behavioral performance includes sales planning and prospecting activities. On the other hand, outcome performance refers to sales results, market share and customer satisfaction. The sales management and leadership skill of HOBs are important, especially in planning, managing and controlling the sales activities. HOBs need to determine the direction and provide input and feedback to sales advisors. However, limited or little attention was given for lead management that involved prospecting processes and sales activities in TCM Sarawak branches.

As pointed out by Dubinsky (1999), sales managers are responsible for all shortcomings of sales performance as they are in the position to evaluate, identify and monitor sales trends. During the First Cycle, the HOBs have failed to demonstrate in their action that they were fully aware of their respective sales performances. It was evident from the findings that HOBs did not have evaluation report, not only for their sales performances, but also the evaluation on the planned sales activities events organized by their branches.

Furthermore, research indicated that measurement and feedback are essential to increase in performance. There was no structured sales plan developed by HOBs

during the first cycle intervention. As a result, HOBs have no basis or benchmark to evaluate sales performances. Henry (1975) opined that sales leadership activities can have great impact on sales people's performance as they need to know and understand the plan and progress of sales people's activities. Appropriate sales management attention is also required to focus on sales people's behavior to promote positive impact on behaviors and outcomes.

Score-monitoring tools or proper sales performance records are critical to know how sales people are performing. The outcome in Second Cycle has given the HOBs a new tool to conduct sales evaluation with their respective SAs by comparing SAs' sales commitment and the actual results achieved. The process is consistent with Bobby and Kenneth (2009), Smythe (2008), Chang (2006), Crawford (2006) and Bandura (1997) that self-evaluations, employees' goal setting, and increasing workplace optimism are key attributes in influencing employees' commitment and performance. HOBs' effective use of their leadership strengths has helped to enhance SAs' performance outcomes by monitoring the SAs consistently. With close monitoring, HOBs can evaluate how well the SAs have performed against the targets committed.

Traditionally, the practices in TCM were more concerned with the sales outcomes and there was little control (Third sub-category of Theme Three) on the sales activities of branches. Hence, it was not surprising to note the results in First Cycle

that HOBs' behaviors were in contradiction to the sales force control systems highlighted by Anderson and Oliver (1987). Anderson and Oliver (1987) highlighted that outcome-based control will have lesser positive impact on sales people's long term performance compared to behavioral-based control which emphasizes on enhancing sales people's capability and positive job attitudes. They further highlighted that to effectively manage sales force, HOBs are required to assist sales people to align their respective goals towards the branch's goals. Sales managers control competency is not just how much control is exercised by the manager, rather, how well it is being done. It was evident in the findings that the HOBs control competency skills and capabilities in executing the management activities were lacking.

The findings of the First Cycle indicated that SAs have the freedom to do what they want. It was a common sight to see SAs staying in the showrooms everyday doing nothing, except chit-chatting, watching TV and reading newspaper. There was no evidence of instituting a control mechanism to monitor SAs' daily activities. Hall (2008) opined the ultimate goal is to ensure sustainability of organization, controlling its sale force and sales activities are vital to achieve the organizations long term goals.

5.2.1 Outcomes of First and Second Cycle

As evident in findings, the three main factors described under the three themes have impacted HOBs ability in implementing lead management. Hence, new selling concept, management planning and control processes have emerged as outcomes of this AR. These outcomes attempted to address and answer the Third Research Question and Research Objectives; namely, How TCM Sarawak region could enhance its HOB's effectiveness in implementing lead management? To develop a process and/or a program that can help to enhance the effectiveness of HOB in implementing lead management in TCM Sarawak Region.

The first outcome is the selling approach being changed from the traditional hunting approach for hot prospects to nurturing based process. As pointed out by Ramakrishnan et al. (2006), it takes time to nurture the new leads and convert them into hot prospects. Furthermore, Jolson and Wotruba (1992) stated that sales process begins with getting contacts, subsequently progressing through leads and qualify as prospects. Hence, HOBs and SAs were reminded to focus on the farming approach of selling and not merely hunting for immediate sales.

The second outcome from Cycle One and Two is the standardization of job scope and key performance indicators (KPI) for Sarawak Region HOBs, namely; sales achievements, Nissan Sales and Service Satisfaction (NSSS) target, developing subordinates and branch control compliance. The KPI of sales achievement is no

longer focusing on sales outcomes. Instead, it covers the behavior-base performance consistent with the sales force control concept proposed by Anderson and Oliver (1987).

The third outcome is the introduction of sales planning process which is similar to Fayol's basic management function for managers as described in chapter two. In this process, HOBs are required to obtain SAs' annual commitment (or targets) by models for sales, bookings, prospects and leads. As pointed out by Anderson and Onyemah (2006), sales leaders need to assist sales people to align their respective goals towards the company's. Latham (2007) concurred that goal setting has great impact on employees' engagement and performance.

Fourth outcome is the introduction of the three white boards (Appendix 4.32, 4.35 and 4.36) as indicated in the new branch management control process. Dashboards are defined as a visual and interactive performance management tool that displays key information required to achieve the desired goals (Yigitbasioglu and Velcu, 2012). These white boards serve as a tool for HOBs to monitor and control SAs' daily performances. The introduction of these white boards control mechanism is consistent with the suggestion made by Velcu-Laitinen and Yigitbasioglu (1012) that a visual and functional feature of dashboard are useful for the front-line sales staff to monitor and evaluate the sales performance.

The white boards serve not only as a control tool to monitor and evaluate SAs' performances, but also helped to challenge and motivate SAs to do better as they are able see the performances of others (SAs). Such control system is a key management tool in sales as it is able to influence sales people's attitude, behavior, motivate them to perform better in order to achieve both their personal and company's desired goals. The new process is consistent with the suggestions by Mantrala et al. (2010) that the close monitoring of sales people has great impact on motivation and influence of salesperson performance.

However, two weaknesses identified in the findings need HQ's involvement. Firstly, training modules and programs to strengthen HOBs' management and leadership skills require HQ's endorsement and support. Secondly, to enhance the current lead management information system needs approval from HQ top management before HQ Information Department could upgrade or reengineer the entire system. Nevertheless, these two items were subsequently accepted by the Executive Director and introduced at HQ level in 2013 and 2014.

5.3 Research Implication

5.3.1 Theoretical Implication

The findings of this AR are consistent and contribute to knowledge on theories related to various management disciplines, such as leadership and organizational change.

First, the findings from this study revealed that transformational leadership style is effective for the HOBs and support literatures in past studies. Embracing transformational leadership style has been shown to be crucial for the development of a positive leadership. A transformational leadership style requires HOBs to take an active role in implementing lead management, articulating a clear vision for the branch and explaining how targets should be set. Furthermore, they are acting as role models and exemplifying the importance of lead management in both words and deeds, showing concern for employees' needs and respond and act upon their concerns.

Hence, these findings are an extension to the theoretical knowledge on the effects of leaders-members relationship as suggested by Wang, Law, Hackett, Wang and Chen (2005). In addition, these findings also extend our knowledge and understanding that sales managers play an important role in influencing and motivating sales people's performance (Piercy, Cravens and Morgan, 1998 and Harmon, Brown, Widing, and Hammond, 2002).

The findings of this study is an extension to Mayer and Salovey's (1997)'s argument that transformational approach of managing SAs need to have the ability to generate positive feelings to understand and regulate emotions of employees and, motivate them to excel in the performance. Effectiveness and success are not only a matter of developing physical skills, knowledge and abilities, but rather emotions play a major

part in human performance. What stops people from exercising their skills and knowledge is the failure of applying their self-management techniques where their emotions restrict their effectiveness.

Hence, to achieve a breakthrough in sales performance and achieve the MTP goal by 2016, it requires the HOBs to develop not only their skills and ability, but rather also their emotional intelligence. As such, by cultivating emotional intelligence in harmony with skills and ability, sales leaders could enhance their capability to adapt skills to value relationships and trust built up with the SAs. This positive effect demonstrated by HOBs is also consistent with Goleman (1998)'s definition of EI as the ability to handle matters effectively and enabling subordinates to work together.

5.3.2 Implication for Practice

Empirical evidence derived from the AR is that the effectiveness of lead management depends on the quality of leadership that will shape and influence how lead management will be implemented. It is important that leaders aware that their actions and behaviors send important messages to the workforce. Their 'actions and words' need to be congruent. This is consistent with a transformational leadership that 'mindful' leaders act as role models for peers and subordinates.

The findings of this AR showed that Sarawak Region HOBs were lacking in their leadership and management skills. In addition, the HOBs were incompetent in motivating, inspiring and training the SAs to perform beyond what is expected of them. HOBs even failed to provide direction for SAs and did not develop sales plan for the branch.

The ED acknowledged these findings that all HOBs in the company have similar problem. As evident in the National Sales Leadership Forum, the ED has made a call to all the front-line sales leaders (Regional Heads, HOBs, Sales Managers, Sales Executives and Sales Supervisors) to have mindset change. The following were the transformational outcomes introduced by HQ top management.

From Hunting to Farming for Prospects

The urgent call of moving away from hunting for prospects, instead, starts to focus on the farming process to nurture long term relationship with potential leads. It was evident in the regional sales convention that all respective regional heads have responded positively to ED's appeal of transformational change by focusing on the farming approach of selling.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

The standardization of HOBs job scope and key performance indicators (Appendixes 4.48a, 4.48b, 4.48c and 4.48d) in Sarawak Region was accepted by senior management and introduced to all respective regional heads. One of the changes in the new KPIs was the acknowledgement of HOBs' role in developing subordinates, especially the SAs. In the past, senior management did not allow HOBs to conduct training and developing the SAs as they believed that HOBs should only focus in helping SAs to do sales. As such, HOBs were not being trained to be a trainer, motivator and mentor.

Development of Mobile-based Lead Management Information System

TCM top management acknowledged on the legacy lead management information system is inadequate. A new smart phone based lead management information system was introduced to monitor and control sales advisors' activities and performances. This is consistent with the suggestion of Han (2015) that organization should provide sales people with the latest tools, such as smart phone and tablets so that SAs can move around freely and at the same time being provided with up-to-date information from the company.

Furthermore it is also in line with Kumar and Raghavendran's (2013) view that technological breakthrough has helped SA in communication process to drive greater speed and efficiency while doing sales outside the company. This mobile Smartphone

application is to complement the existing lead management information system. All SAs can update and manage leads and, follow through sales opportunity in real time through a mobile interface. It was a successful output from this study as the top management has recognized the urgency to change the legacy lead management information system used by the company since 2011.

Branch Management Development Program (BMDP)

Senior management has adopted researcher's recommendation that training program be developed to enhance sales leaders' leadership and management skills. Branch Management Development Program (Appendix 4.39a, 4.39b and 4.39c) was developed and approved by senior management on 17th February 2014.

Initially, Human Capital Management Department aimed to launch a training program ("Sales Management Associate Program") targeting new recruits of Sales Managers, Assistant Sales Managers and Sales Executive. However, researcher expressed concern that current sales leaders in the company were lacking and highlighted that the proposed training program is only good for the new recruits of managers. Researcher has made strong recommendation to the senior management that a Branch Manager Development Program is urgently needed to address the current needs of the company. Subsequently, ED accepted the Branch Management Development Program (BMDP), Figure 5.1 showed the program outlines for one of the modules of the approved Branch Management Development Program.

Figure 5.1

Program Outlines of Talent Management

<i>Program Outlines of Talent Management</i>	
<i>Module</i>	<i>Learning Objectives</i>
<i>Roles of effective Sales Managers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to examine the business evolution and implications for sales management • Add value through multiple roles as strategist, business manager and talent manager • Able to plan, direct, monitor and review sales activities (e.g. road shows, showroom events and other sales activities)
<i>Vision in sales leadership</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning sales goals with corporate goals and values • Selecting your market strategies to further penetrate the market
<i>Managing sales performance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using tools to measure and manage the performance of the sales force • Create sales budgeting, forecasting and projecting • Monitoring and reviewing the sales funnel (from prospecting to booking to Final invoice)
<i>Talent management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and implementing the talent management process • Creating own profile of successful sales persons • Recruiting and hiring sales team • Coaching and training sales team • Conducting sales meeting

The first training module sales management training entitled “Hands on Coach: Managing sales, people and service levels” (under Talent Management category) was launched in Oct. 2014. The keys messages and findings of this AR (with words and phrases in bold) are indicated in the training module (Figure 5.1).

Hence, the findings from this AR have influence and impact for TCM HQ in setting the future direction for the branch sales operation, especially to prepare HOBs in implementing lead management.

5.3.3 Implication for Industry

Researcher has conducted and interviewed three representatives from automotive companies with regards to their respective implementation of lead management activities. The outcomes showed that these three companies were facing identical scenario whereby HOBs were ineffective in implementing lead management. Their respective sales teams were very much interested with immediate sales. They were hunting for hot prospects and hoping to conclude or sign deals immediately. There was no focus on the farming approach of nurturing the leads and contacts that have been generated through sales promotions. Appendix 5.1 recorded some comments made by the respective Heads of the three automotive companies that researcher has interviewed

As such, sales organization (automotive and non-automotive) with frontline sales managers would be able to replicate and apply the processes from this AR. The focal point would be on the sales managers' leadership behaviors and management competencies in leading the sales team.

5.4 Limitations of Study

Although the researcher made a strong attempt to embed the lead management activities with some members of the team, yet the researcher fell short for the start. The researcher has made great effort to use the right words of encouragement, proper tone of voice to inspire and motivate, and create the right context for the HOBs. In

the beginning the success was moderate. It fell short with the HOBs in the region due simply to not having sufficient opportunity to engage these HOBs in true dialogue before the start of this project. The dialog was not effective because the researcher did not take into consideration the historical and cultural context in greater details. The researcher could have spent more time in joint discussion with all team members, especially the HOBs to uncover the issues affecting their implementation process of lead management activities before the start of this study.

Nevertheless, there is one limitation that was not being expressed one way or another as it involved researcher personally. After reflecting on the entire study, processes, the results and outcomes of the research, researcher acknowledges that the imperfection of his own knowledge as the success was a team effort contributed by the participants and other committee members. Without their undivided commitments and contributions to this study, the results and outcomes would not be the same. Indeed, this AR process has been extraordinary as it helps not only in the areas of organizational development, but also personal development of each individual involved in this study. Furthermore, Silverman (2000) has quoted that the completion of a research dissertations is properly viewed as displays of successful apprenticeship. Hence, the researcher recognizes the imperfection of his own knowledge has just begun at the successful apprentice. As such, researcher acknowledged that there may be some potential factors influencing the effectiveness of leadership in implementing lead management were not identified.

Another limitation of this study is the scope of study, whereby the researcher can only make decision and influence the changes within Sarawak Region. As evident in the findings, no doubt the ED has acknowledged the effective use of management control tools, such as the three control boards (Appendix 4.26, 4.29 and 4.30) and also the control processes (sales planning process and branch management control process), but the researcher has no influence on the implementation in other regions within the TCM company. Furthermore, researcher is in no position to collect data from other five regions for this study as the scope of study would be very complex and time consuming.

The use of qualitative methodology in this AR potentially has some limitations. First, there are limitations in the interpretive nature of qualitative study as the expressions of words can be subjective as compared to numeric data in quantitative research (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In this AR, researcher was the only one conducting the data analysis, its interpretation and subsequent grouping of categories and themes. Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor and Tindall (1994) opined that researcher is the main player in interpreting data. As such, different researchers might interpret the same data differently.

5.5 Future Research

What makes a successful salesman? This question was one of the frequently asked and difficult to answer (Webster, 1968). A review of past studies of salesman

effectiveness provides an insight of a complex and more fruitful ways of examining personal selling function.

Owusu-Bempah et al. (2013) stated that researchers have started to realize the importance of followers in impacting leadership effectiveness and pointed out that research effort needs to be on followers-centric. As stated in the literatures review, leadership scholars have started to focus on the impact of followers-centric leaders on the effectiveness of leadership. In this study, it was evident that SAs were the party involved in implementing lead management.

As compared to HOBs, SAs are more complex than the HOBs because they comprised of a group of diverse participants from different cultural background, academic level, ethnic and age group. Traditionally, in automotive industry, a great majority of SAs' academic level are not degree holder. Hence, the situation becomes more difficult as their level of understanding issues could be quite low. Therefore, it is suggested that future research should focus on understanding SAs' behaviors for effective implementation of lead management as it can enhance leaders' effectiveness.

In addition, qualitative research is a naturalistic way of providing an in-depth understanding of how participants develop meaning in human behaviors (Neuman,

2006). It allows spontaneous creativity, ingenuity and originality of investigating the research problems and issues. However, the findings can be more complete if other quantitative approach in the same areas of concern can be used as these methods could add more depth and richness for replication of the study.

Action research is aimed to solve a problem. It is insufficient as emphasis on underpinning theory and framework is not the main focus. Hence, meeting contribution to practice requires long-term case studies to explore the impact of leadership effectiveness in leading the sales team over a period of time. Other quantitative inquiries might be more appropriate to provide further explanations and insights into issues not detectable from qualitative method.

5.6 Conclusion

Effective leader could influence others to do the work. First of all, the leader requires to demonstrate values of high credibility and integrity as people may have disparate expectations, such as can be relied upon, to behave predictably, to act and negotiate fairly, walk-the-talk and mean what he said (Parra, Nalda and Perles, 2011). Leaders need to possess and adhere to a set of principles, such as reliability, fairness, justice, and consistency. According to Khazanchi and Masterson (2011) and Ambrose and Schminke (2003), the trust of a leader decreases when the subordinates perceived an imbalance in the exchange and experienced dissatisfaction. Therefore, leaders need to maintain high value of credibility and integrity for subordinates to put trust in their

leaders. Trust is recognized as a personal belief about the degree to which a leader is perceived to be trustworthy (Grant and Sumanth, 2009).

Leaders demonstrating competence in communication vision, support behaviours, perceived voluntary helps and cooperation have been found to gain high level of trusts from the subordinates (Jap, Robertson and Hamilton, 2011; Grant and Sumanth, 2009; De Jong, Van der Vegt and Molleman, 2007; Gillespie and Mann, 2004; and Young, and Perrew, 2000). It takes time to develop and gain trust from a salesperson. Trust is a process that can change over time. As such, in the process of developing trusting relationship with the SAs, HOBs need to take certain actions in their own lives by enhancing their personal values of credibility and integrity. As evident in the findings of this study, the theme of value alignment is therefore considered to be critical in order for the HOBs to build up the confidence of SAs to trust their words.

Not unexpectedly, a great majority of perceived factors influencing the HOBs' effectiveness were personal behaviours and attitudes. These HOBs have reflected the need for greater change in their mindset and commitment in discharging their respective duties. There is also a need of better understanding the SAs. Not forgetting the urgent attention needed to reengineer the organizations' structural factors as it can enhance and strengthen the leadership effectiveness in implementing lead management. In addition, the dominant personal factor that emerged was the need for

HOBs to build strong personal and trusting relationship with SAs by instituting better communication process.

Most of these results are probably not surprising and are consistent with the extant literature and also representing the natural extensions of current experiences and knowledge. However, this AR instituted a substantive contribution in the form of empirical evidence to the literature.

Getting work completed can be satisfying and rewarding. Leading others and influencing them to achieve a vision is even more satisfying and rewarding. Therefore, the researcher could only conclude by saying that the highest goal of leadership development is to ensure improvement in individual's lives.

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